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MIGHTIEST MONARCH OF A TIME-LOST LAND!
KING CONAN™
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THE SWORD-AND-SORCERY SAGA THAT HAD TO BE TOLD!
CONAN VS. THOTH-AMON --TO THE DEATH!
JB

"Know, O prince, that the man called Conan was all things in his day: a thief, a reaver, a slayer... fierce sellsword and fiercer pirate... and finally, usurper king of proud, civilized Aquilonia, mightiest of Hyborian kingdoms... with his queen Zenobia at his side, and his son Prince Conn ripe to carry on the legend..."

—*The Nemedian Chronicles.*

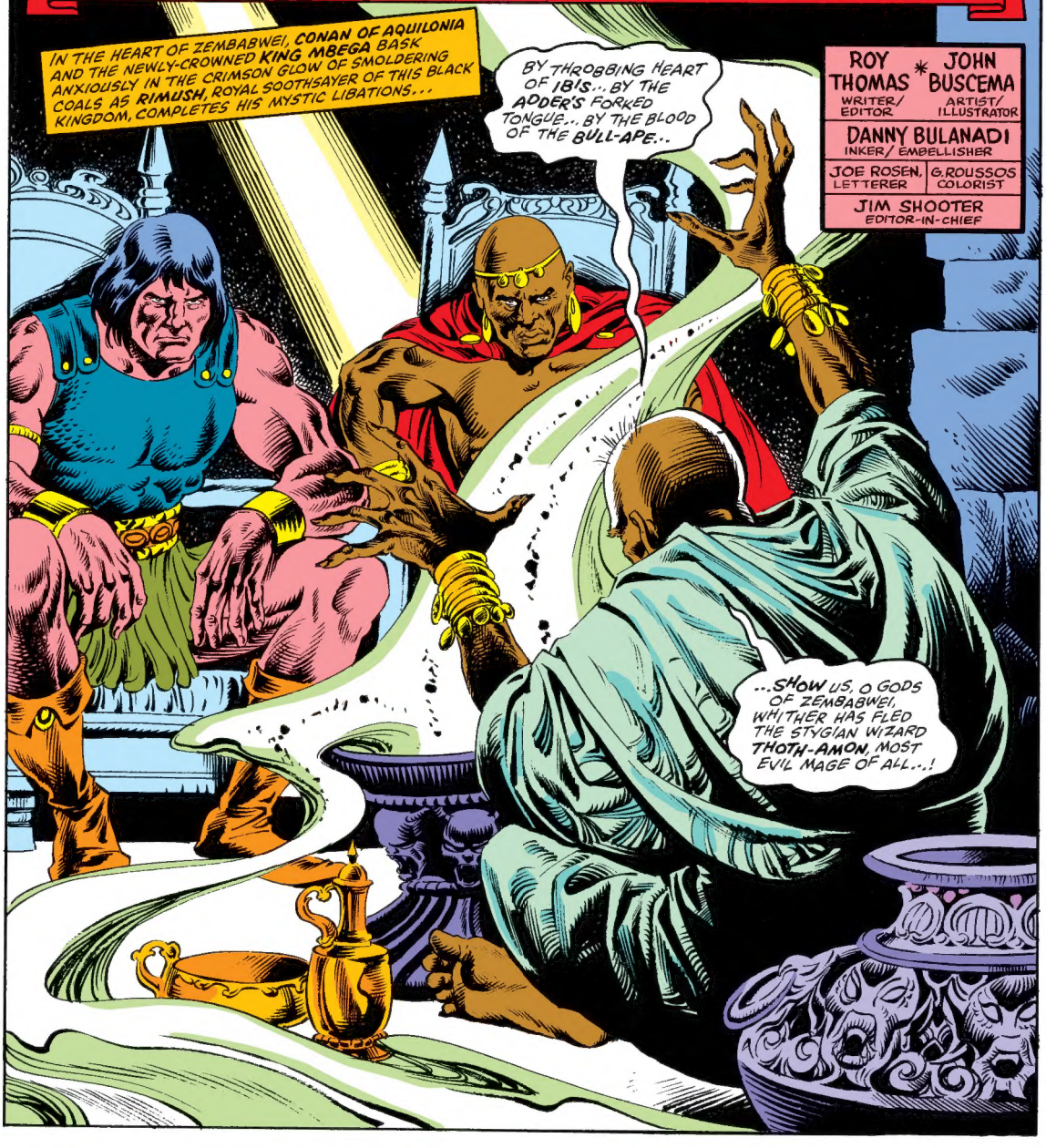
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **KING CONAN**

Featuring The Epic Adventurer Created By **ROBERT E. HOWARD**

SHADOWS IN THE SKULL!

ADAPTED FROM THE STORY BY *L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP & LIN CARTER*

FEATURING THE HERO CREATED BY *ROBERT E. HOWARD*


IN THE HEART OF ZEMBABWEI, CONAN OF AQUILONIA AND THE NEWLY-CROWNED KING MBEGA BASK ANXIOUSLY IN THE CRIMSON GLOW OF SMOLDERING COALS AS RIMUSH, ROYAL SOOTHSAYER OF THIS BLACK KINGDOM, COMPLETES HIS MYSTIC LIBATIONS...
BY THROBBING HEART OF IBIS... BY THE ADDER'S FORKED TONGUE... BY THE BLOOD OF THE BULL-APE...
...SHOW US, O GODS OF ZEMBABWEI, WHITHER HAS FLED THE STYGIAN WIZARD THOTH-AMON, MOST EVIL MAGE OF ALL...!
ROY THOMAS * JOHN BUSCEMA
WRITER/ EDITOR
ARTIST/ ILLUSTRATOR
DANNY BULANADI
INKER/ EMBELLISHER
JOE ROSEN, LETTERER
G. ROUSSOS COLORIST
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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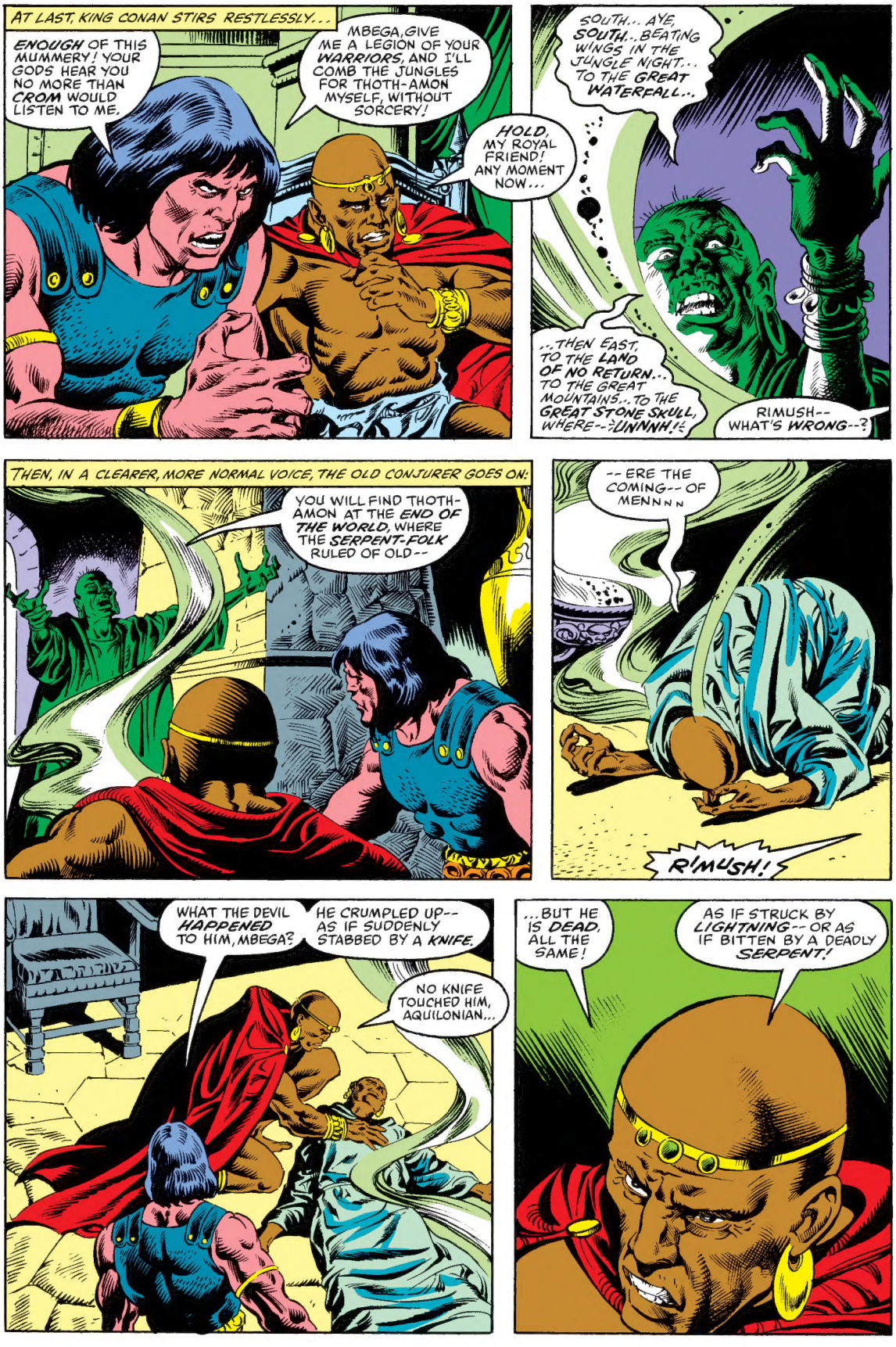
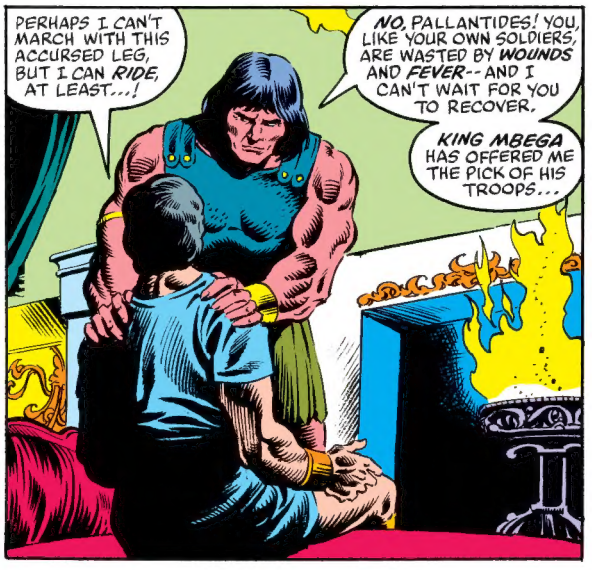
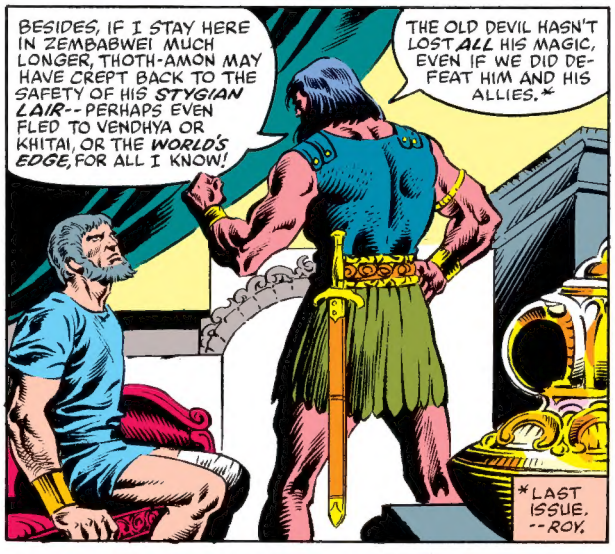
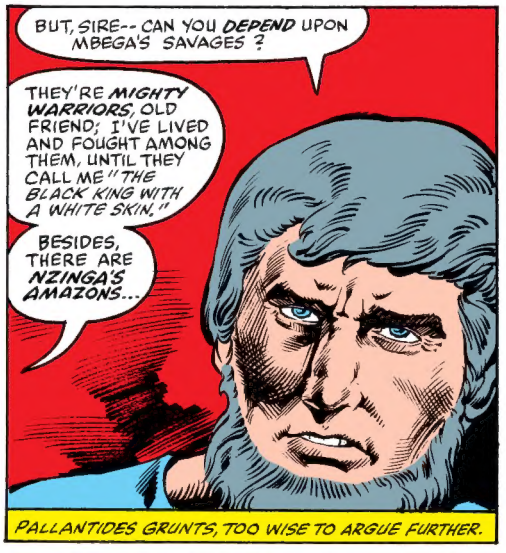

AT LAST, KING CONAN STIRS RESTLESSLY...
ENOUGH OF THIS MUMMERY! YOUR GODS HEAR YOU NO MORE THAN CROM WOULD LISTEN TO ME.
MBEGA, GIVE ME A LEGION OF YOUR WARRIORS, AND I'LL COMB THE JUNGLES FOR THOTH-AMON MYSELF, WITHOUT SORCERY!
HOLD, MY ROYAL FRIEND! ANY MOMENT NOW...
SOUTH... AYE, SOUTH... BEATING WINGS IN THE JUNGLE NIGHT... TO THE GREAT WATERFALL...
...THEN EAST, TO THE LAND OF NO RETURN... TO THE GREAT MOUNTAINS... TO THE GREAT STONE SKULL, WHERE--:UNNNH!:
RIMUSH-- WHAT'S WRONG--?
THEN, IN A CLEARER, MORE NORMAL VOICE, THE OLD CONJURER GOES ON:
YOU WILL FIND THOTH-AMON AT THE END OF THE WORLD, WHERE THE SERPENT-FOLK RULED OF OLD--
--ERE THE COMING--OF MENNNN
R'MUSH!
WHAT THE DEVIL HAPPENED TO HIM, MBEGA?
HE CRUMPLED UP-- AS IF SUDDENLY STABBED BY A KNIFE.
NO KNIFE TOUCHED HIM, AQUILONIAN...
...BUT HE IS DEAD, ALL THE SAME!
AS IF STRUCK BY LIGHTNING-- OR AS IF BITTEN BY A DEADLY SERPENT!

SOON AFTERWARD...
HEAD OF NERGAL, SIRE-- I WON'T HEAR OF IT!
I'LL NOT HAVE YOU LARKING OFF INTO THE JUNGLES ALONE WITHOUT A COMPANY OF STOUT AQUILONIANS AT YOUR BACK!

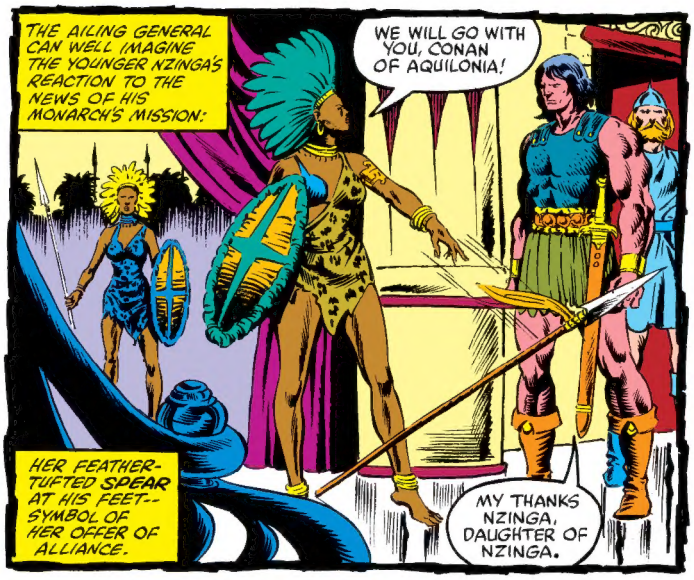

PERHAPS I CAN'T MARCH WITH THIS ACCURSED LEG, BUT I CAN RIDE, AT LEAST...!
NO, PALLANTIDES! YOU, LIKE YOUR OWN SOLDIERS, ARE WASTED BY WOUNDS AND FEVER-- AND I CAN'T WAIT FOR YOU TO RECOVER.
KING MBEGA HAS OFFERED ME THE PICK OF HIS TROOPS...


BESIDES, IF I STAY HERE IN ZEMBABWEI MUCH LONGER, THOTH-AMON MAY HAVE CREPT BACK TO THE SAFETY OF HIS STYGIAN LAIR-- PERHAPS EVEN FLED TO VENDHYA OR KHITAI, OR THE WORLD'S EDGE, FOR ALL I KNOW!
THE OLD DEVIL HASN'T LOST ALL HIS MAGIC, EVEN IF WE DID DEFEAT HIM AND HIS ALLIES.*
*LAST ISSUE. --ROY.


BUT, SIRE-- CAN YOU DEPEND UPON MBEGA'S SAVAGES ?
THEY'RE MIGHTY WARRIORS, OLD FRIEND; I'VE LIVED AND FOUGHT AMONG THEM, UNTIL THEY CALL ME "THE BLACK KING WITH A WHITE SKIN."
BESIDES, THERE ARE NZINGA'S AMAZONS...
PALLANTIDES GRUNTS, TOO WISE TO ARGUE FURTHER.

HE KNOWS THAT MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS AGO, CONAN-- THEN A ZINGARAN BUCCANEER-- HAD VISITED THE COUNTRY OF THE BLACK QUEEN NZINGA.
THEY HAD SHARED THE MUTUAL RESPECT OF SWORN FOES... AND PASSIONATE WARRIORS.*
*SEE SAVAGE SWORD #41. --R.T.

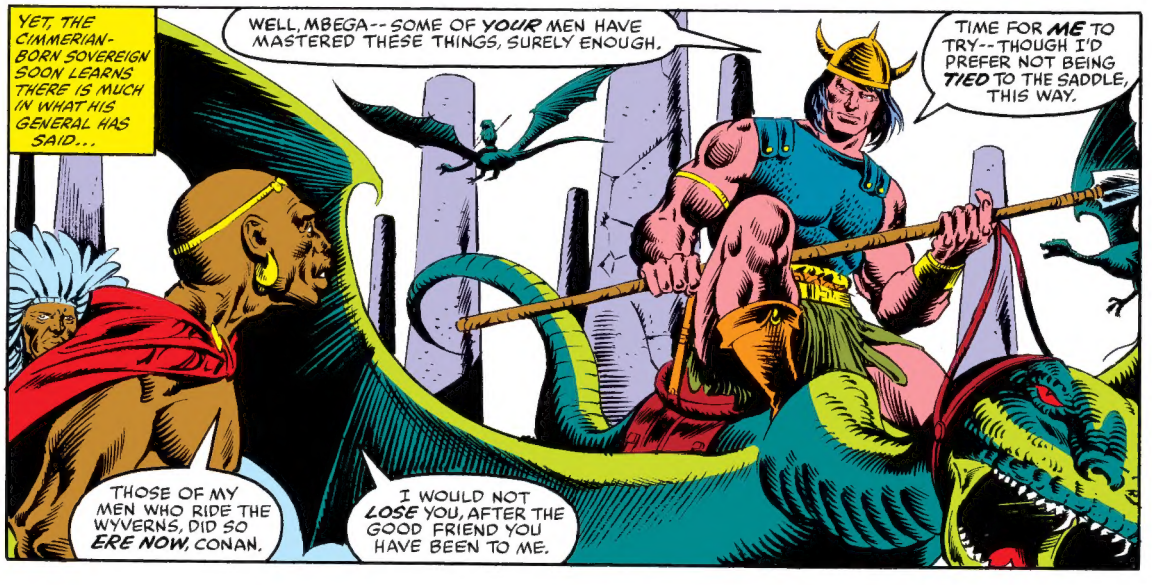
AND NOW, JUST A WEEK PAST, A COMPANY OF BLACK AMAZONS HAD APPEARED IN ZEMBABWEI, TO REPRESENT THEIR QUEEN AT MBEGA'S CORONATION.
THEY WERE LED BY HER DAUGHTER-- ALSO CALLED NZINGA-- A LITHE LIONESS OF TWENTY RAINS.

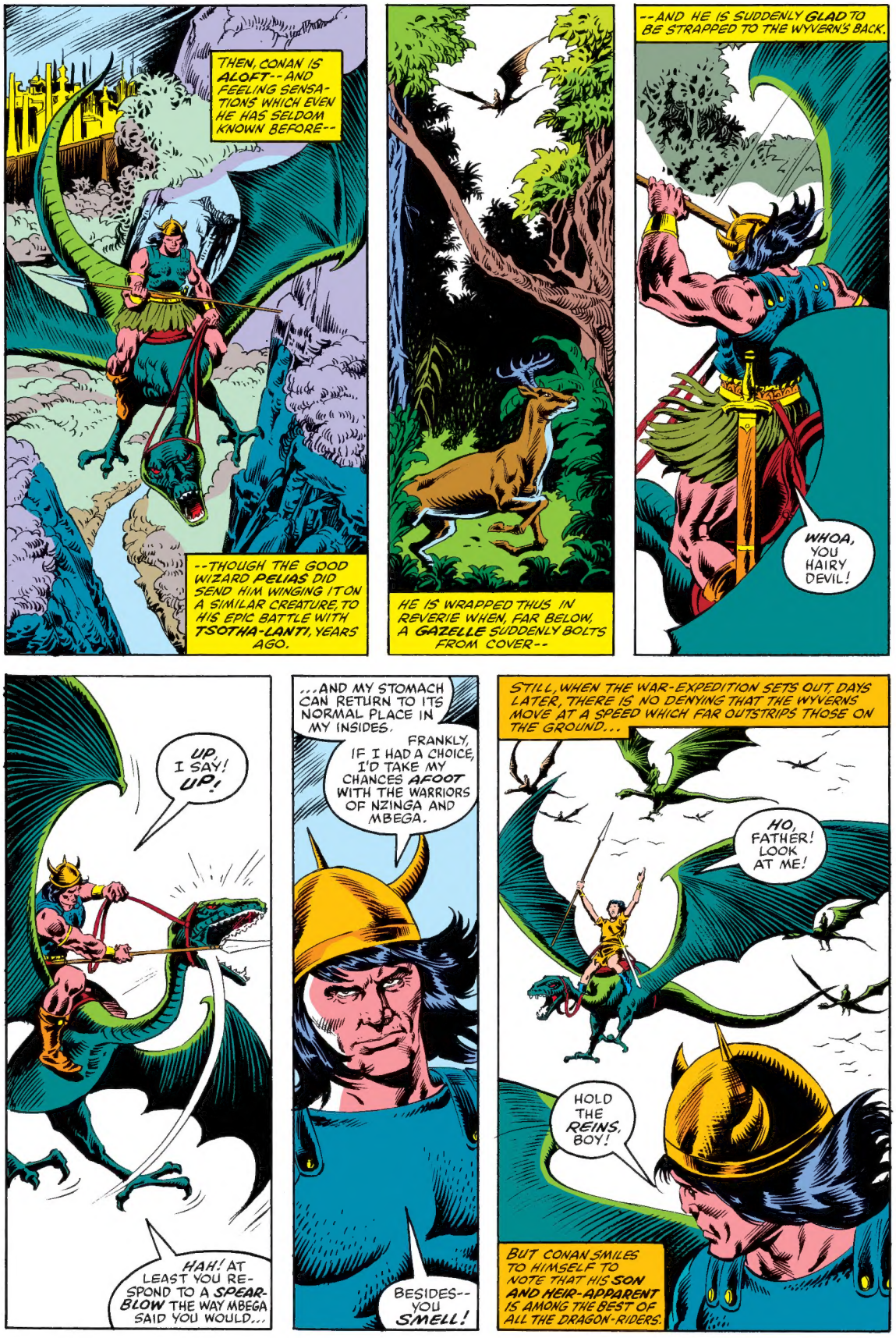

THE AILING GENERAL CAN WELL IMAGINE THE YOUNGER NZINGA'S REACTION TO THE NEWS OF HIS MONARCH'S MISSION:
WE WILL GO WITH YOU, CONAN OF AQUILONIA!
HER FEATHER-TUFTED SPEAR AT HIS FEET--SYMBOL OF HER OFFER OF ALLIANCE.
MY THANKS NZINGA, DAUGHTER OF NZINGA.

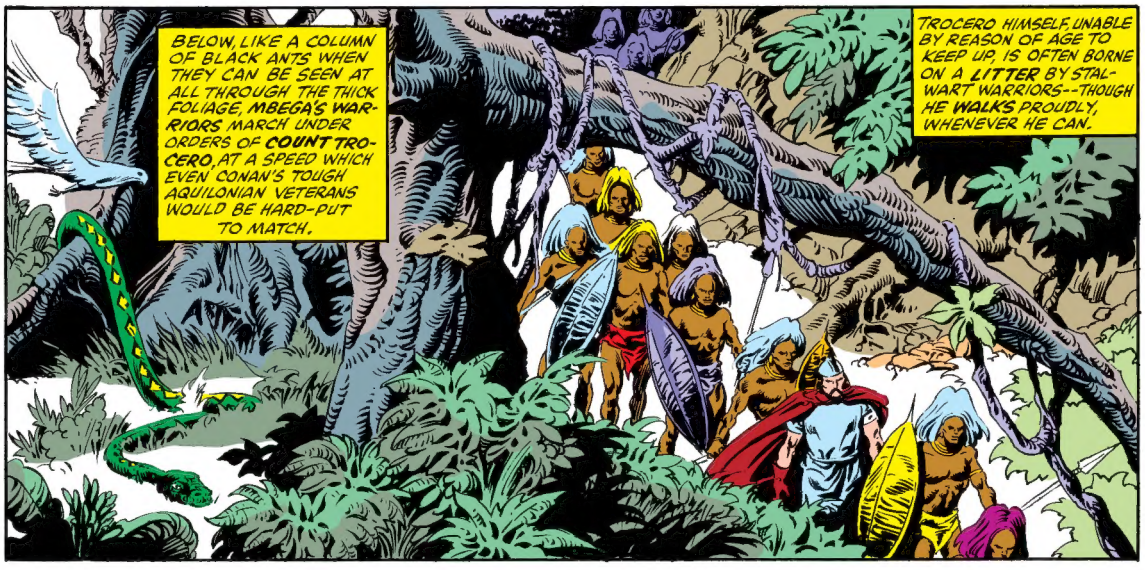
THUS, PALLANTIDES TRIES ANOTHER TACK:
STILL, SIRE, IT MIGHT BE A THOUSAND LEAGUES TO THIS--THIS LAND OF NO RETURN, OF WHICH A DEAD CONJURER SPOKE.
EVEN MBEGA HAS NO MAPS OF THAT REGION, YOU SAID.
MAPS ARE FOR MARCHING MEN, OLD FRIEND.
AND HOW WILL YOU GO? FLY?

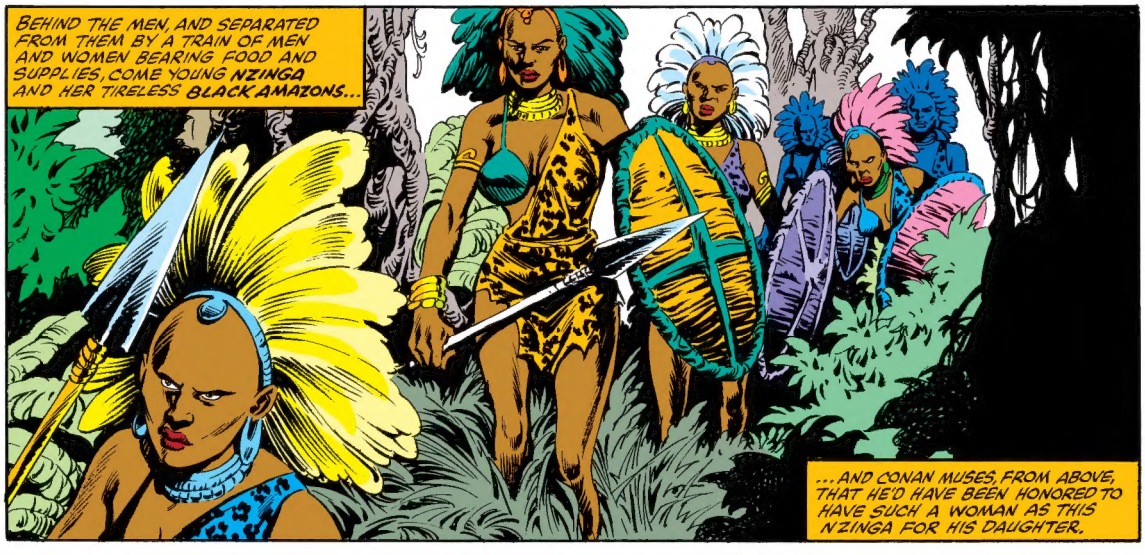
THAT IS, PRINCE CONN AND I SHALL RIDE THEM--AS SHALL THE PICK OF MBEGA'S ROYAL GUARD.
YES--FLY! WE'LL BE RIDING THE WYVERNS--THOSE FLYING DRAGONS TRAINED BY MBEGA'S DEAD TWIN.*
LUCKILY, WHEN THOTH-AMON ESCAPED ON ONE OF THE BRUTES, NOT ALL WERE LET LOOSE.
*LAST ISSUE. --ROY.

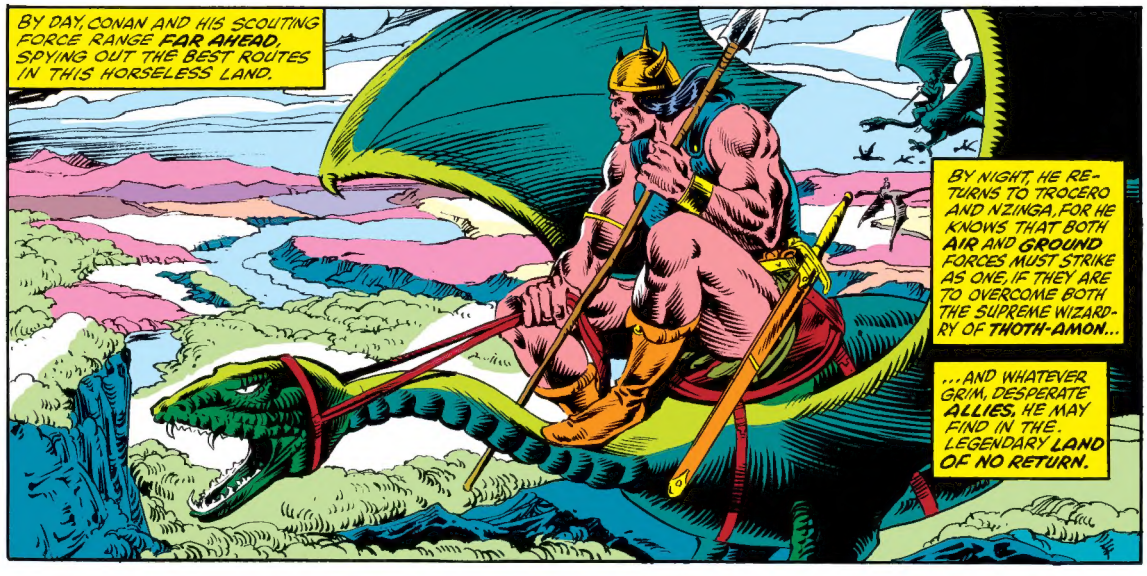
SIRE--YOU CAN'T RIDE THOSE WINGED DEVILS!
I CAN TRY!
I'VE RIDDEN HORSES AND CAMELS--AYE, EVEN ELEPHANTS, ON OCCASION--SO A MERE DRAGON SHOULDN'T DAUNT ME.
PALLANTIDES KNOWS WHEN A MATTER IS SETTLED... AND RAILS NO MORE.


YET, THE CIMMERIAN-BORN SOVEREIGN SOON LEARNS THERE IS MUCH IN WHAT HIS GENERAL HAS SAID...
WELL, MBEGA--SOME OF YOUR MEN HAVE MASTERED THESE THINGS, SURELY ENOUGH.
TIME FOR ME TO TRY--THOUGH I'D PREFER NOT BEING TIED TO THE SADDLE, THIS WAY.
THOSE OF MY MEN WHO RIDE THE WYVERNS, DID SO ERE NOW, CONAN.
I WOULD NOT LOSE YOU, AFTER THE GOOD FRIEND YOU HAVE BEEN TO ME.

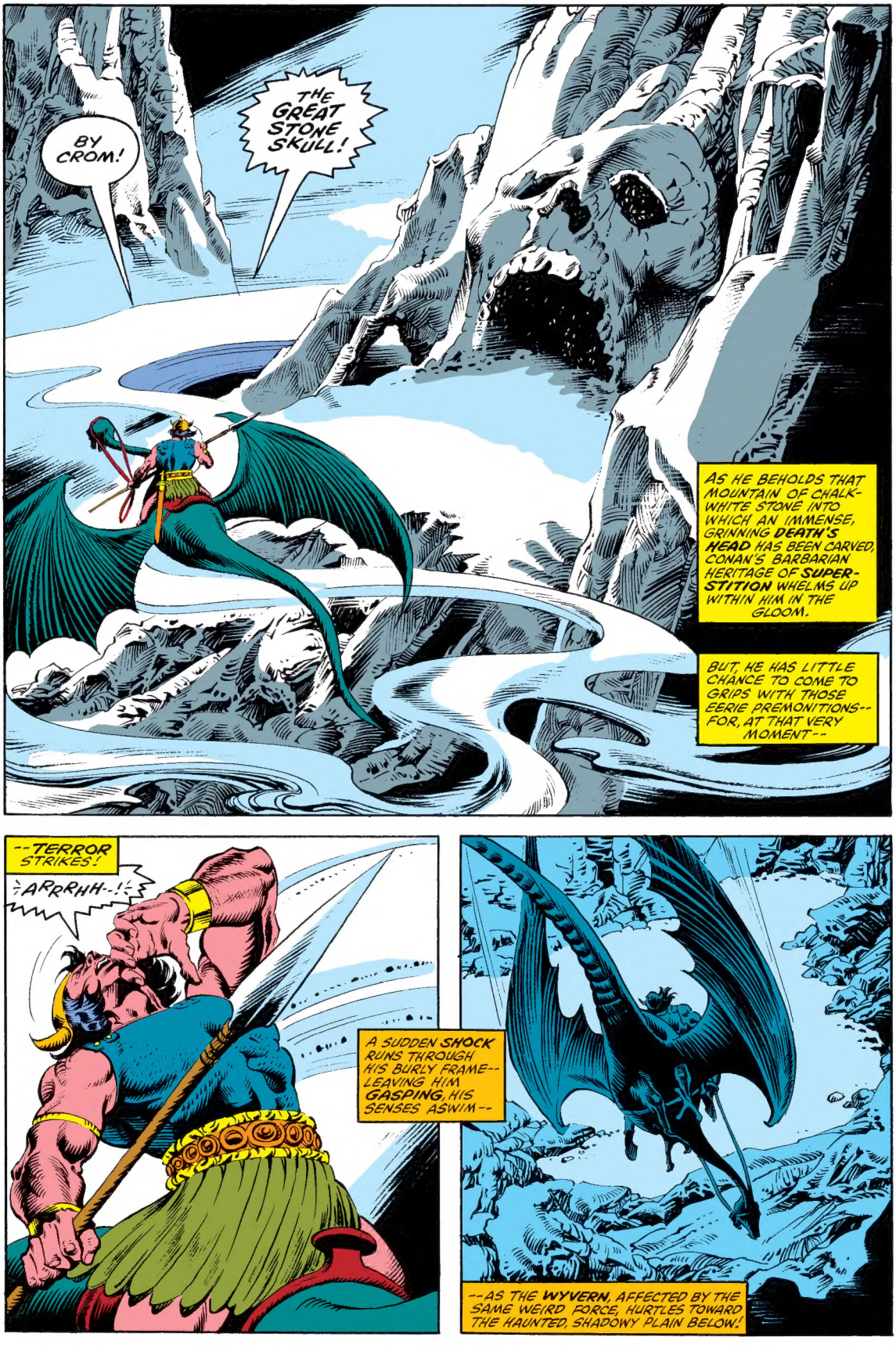

THEN, CONAN IS ALOFT--AND FEELING SENSATIONS WHICH EVEN HE HAS SELDOM KNOWN BEFORE--
--THOUGH THE GOOD WIZARD PELIAS DID SEND HIM WINGING IT ON A SIMILAR CREATURE, TO HIS EPIC BATTLE WITH TSOTHA-LANTI, YEARS AGO.
HE IS WRAPPED THUS IN REVERIE WHEN, FAR BELOW, A GAZELLE SUDDENLY BOLTS FROM COVER--
--AND HE IS SUDDENLY GLAD TO BE STRAPPED TO THE WYVERN'S BACK.
WHOA, YOU HAIRY DEVIL!
UP, I SAY! UP!
HAH! AT LEAST YOU RESPOND TO A SPEAR-BLOW THE WAY MBEGA SAID YOU WOULD...
...AND MY STOMACH CAN RETURN TO ITS NORMAL PLACE IN MY INSIDES.
FRANKLY, IF I HAD A CHOICE, I'D TAKE MY CHANCES AFOOT WITH THE WARRIORS OF NZINGA AND MBEGA.
BESIDES--YOU SMELL!
STILL, WHEN THE WAR-EXPEDITION SETS OUT, DAYS LATER, THERE IS NO DENYING THAT THE WYVERNS MOVE AT A SPEED WHICH FAR OUTSTRIPS THOSE ON THE GROUND...
HO, FATHER! LOOK AT ME!
HOLD THE REINS, BOY!
BUT CONAN SMILES TO HIMSELF TO NOTE THAT HIS SON AND HEIR-APPARENT IS AMONG THE BEST OF ALL THE DRAGON-RIDERS.

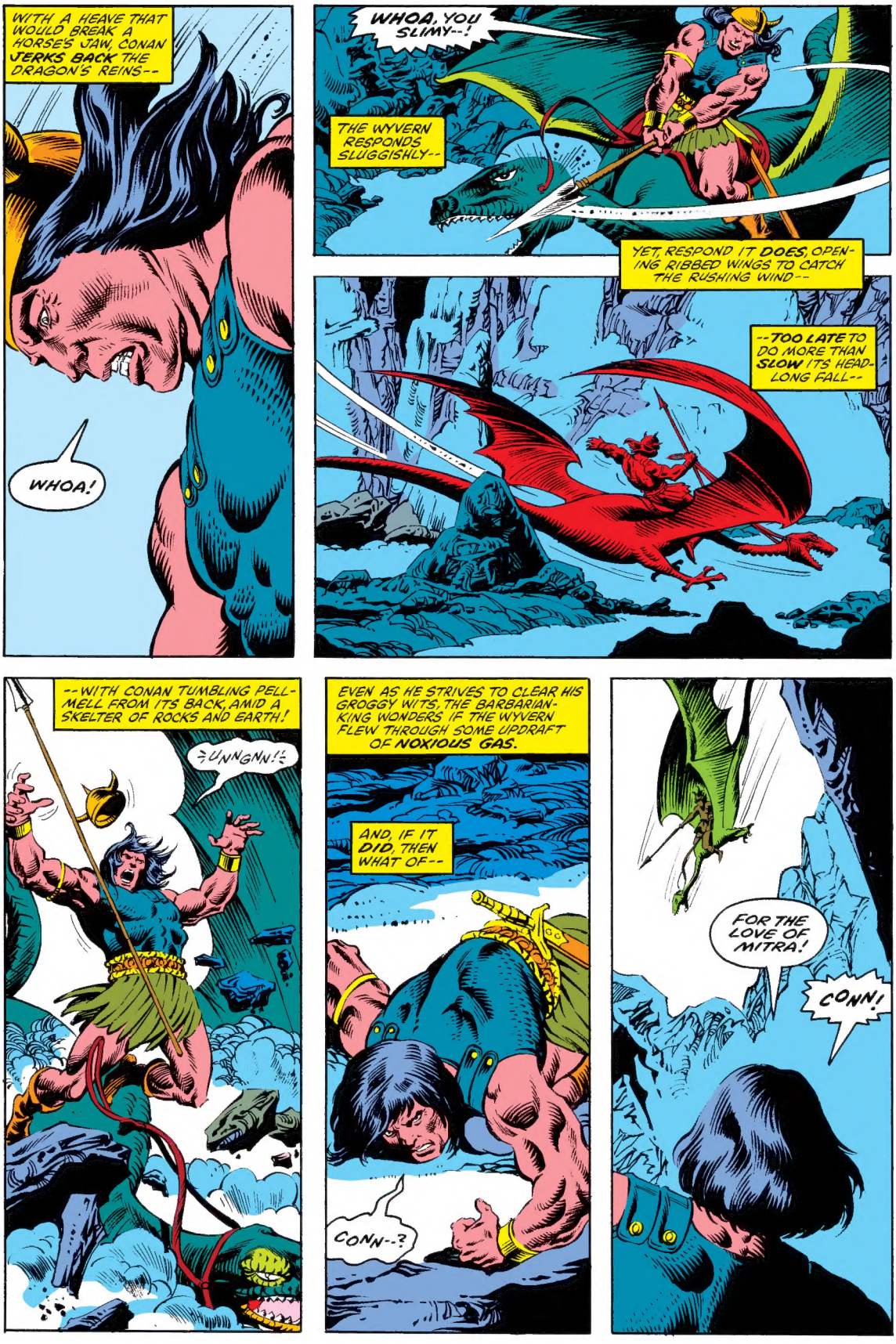

BELOW, LIKE A COLUMN OF BLACK ANTS WHEN THEY CAN BE SEEN AT ALL THROUGH THE THICK FOLIAGE, MBEGA'S WARRIORS MARCH UNDER ORDERS OF COUNT TROCERO, AT A SPEED WHICH EVEN CONAN'S TOUGH AQUILONIAN VETERANS WOULD BE HARD-PUT TO MATCH.
TROCERO HIMSELF, UNABLE BY REASON OF AGE TO KEEP UP, IS OFTEN BORNE ON A LITTER BY STALWART WARRIORS--THOUGH HE WALKS PROUDLY, WHENEVER HE CAN.


BEHIND THE MEN, AND SEPARATED FROM THEM BY A TRAIN OF MEN AND WOMEN BEARING FOOD AND SUPPLIES, COME YOUNG NZINGA AND HER TIRELESS BLACK AMAZONS...
...AND CONAN MUSES, FROM ABOVE, THAT HE'D HAVE BEEN HONORED TO HAVE SUCH A WOMAN AS THIS NZINGA FOR HIS DAUGHTER.


BY DAY, CONAN AND HIS SCOUTING FORCE RANGE FAR AHEAD, SPYING OUT THE BEST ROUTES IN THIS HORSELESS LAND.
BY NIGHT, HE RETURNS TO TROCERO AND NZINGA, FOR HE KNOWS THAT BOTH AIR AND GROUND FORCES MUST STRIKE AS ONE, IF THEY ARE TO OVERCOME BOTH THE SUPREME WIZARDRY OF THOTH-AMON...
...AND WHATEVER GRIM, DESPERATE ALLIES, HE MAY FIND IN THE LEGENDARY LAND OF NO RETURN.

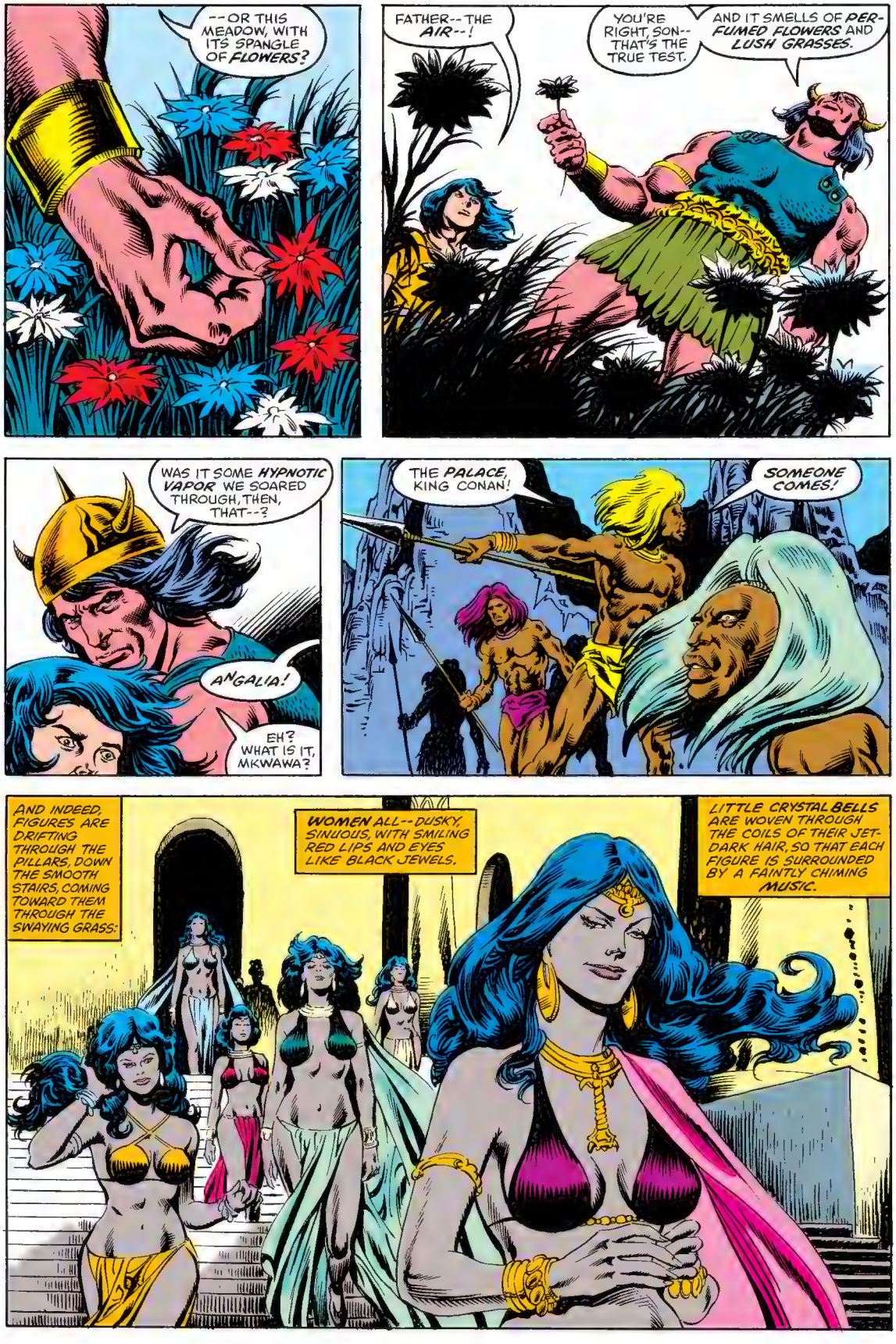
IT HAS BEEN TWO MONTHS SINCE MEN AND BEASTS LEFT ZEMBABWEI'S GATES--AND THE HAZE-REDDENED SUN IS SINKING TOWARD THE JAGGED HORIZON--WHEN THE CIMMERIAN SIGHTS HIS FIRST LANDMARK:
THE GREAT WATERFALL, A WHITE GLITTER THAT PLUNGES FROM TOWERING CLIFFS.
FOR A MOMENT, HE PONDERS WHETHER HE OUGHT TO RETURN TO THE GROUND FORCE NOW FAR BEHIND...
BUT NO! HE'LL MAKE A FEW CASTS EASTWARD, AS DEAD RIMUSH SAID, AND THEN SWING NORTH AGAIN.
PLENTY OF TIME TO REJOIN HIS TROOPS BEFORE NIGHTFALL.
COME, LADS!
AND PRINCE CONN, GRINNING ACROSS THE INTERVENING DISTANCE, FOLLOWS HIS LEAD--JUST AS MBEGA'S WARRIORS, IN TURN, FOLLOW HIM.
MOVE, OLD SCALE-BACK!
A KING CALLS!
THE LAD HAS BEEN THROUGH MUCH SINCE HE JOINED HIS SIRE'S EXPEDITION AT NEBTHU, ON THE RIVER STYX--AND HAS SURELY LEARNED A FEW THINGS ABOUT BEING A WARRIOR-KING, CONAN MUSES.
HIS SIRE DECIDES HE WAS RIGHT TO IGNORE HIS COUNCILORS' ADVICE AND BRING HIS SON ALONG ON EVEN SUCH A DANGEROUS MISSION.
IT IS LATE AFTERNOON--NIGH TIME FOR TURNING BACK--WHEN CONAN SEES HIS SON SUDDENLY POINT...
THERE, FATHER! THERE!


BY CROM!
THE GREAT STONE SKULL!
AS HE BEHOLDS THAT MOUNTAIN OF CHALK-WHITE STONE INTO WHICH AN IMMENSE, GRINNING DEATH'S HEAD HAS BEEN CARVED, CONAN'S BARBARIAN HERITAGE OF SUPER-STITION WHELMS UP WITHIN HIM IN THE GLOOM.
BUT, HE HAS LITTLE CHANCE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THOSE EERIE PREMONITIONS--FOR, AT THAT VERY MOMENT--
--TERROR STRIKES!
ARRRHH--!
A SUDDEN SHOCK RUNS THROUGH HIS BURLY FRAME--LEAVING HIM GASPING, HIS SENSES ASWIM--
--AS THE WYVERN, AFFECTED BY THE SAME WEIRD FORCE, HURTLES TOWARD THE HAUNTED, SHADOWY PLAIN BELOW!


WITH A HEAVE THAT WOULD BREAK A HORSE'S JAW, CONAN JERKS BACK THE DRAGON'S REINS--
WHOA!
WHOA, YOU SLIMY--!
THE WYVERN RESPONDS SLUGGISHLY--
YET, RESPOND IT DOES, OPENING RIBBED WINGS TO CATCH THE RUSHING WIND--
--TOO LATE TO DO MORE THAN SLOW ITS HEADLONG FALL--
--WITH CONAN TUMBLING PELL-MELL FROM ITS BACK, AMID A SKELTER OF ROCKS AND EARTH!
=UNNGNN!=
EVEN AS HE STRIVES TO CLEAR HIS GROGGY WITS, THE BARBARIAN-KING WONDERS IF THE WYVERN FLEW THROUGH SOME UPDRAFT OF NOXIOUS GAS.
AND, IF IT DID, THEN WHAT OF--
CONN--?
FOR THE LOVE OF MITRA!
CONN!

ONE BY ONE, THE STUNNED DRAGONS PLUMMET FROM THE SKY-- BUT THE RUSH OF AIR SEEMS TO ROUSE THE FAINTING LAD--
--SO THAT HE JERKS BACK THE REINS, WITH EVERY OUNCE OF VIGOR IN HIS LITHE YOUNG THEWS--
STOP, CURSE YOUR HIDE!
--AND HIS WYVERN LURCHES DRUNKENLY-- BUT MORE OR LESS SAFELY-- TO THE GROUND.
CONN! CONN, MY SON--
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, BOY?
I-- STRUCK MY HEAD--ON A ROCK, I THINK--
BUT, WE CIMMERIANS ARE TOO HARD-HEADED TO KILL THAT WAY, EH, FATHER?
AYE, LAD.
AYE!
TWO OF THE WARRIORS OF MBEGA, ALAS, ARE LESS FORTUNATE.
AAAAAA
FAILING TO RECOVER FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE WIZARDLY SKY BARRIER, THEY CRASH TO EARTH WITH A SICKENING CRUNCH OF SNAPPING BONES.
THE REST, HOWEVER, MANAGE SOMEHOW TO BRING THEIR NUMBED REPTILE MOUNTS FLOUNDERING TO THE GROUND...
...THOUGH SOMETIMES WITH MARROW-SHAKING IMPACT.

THEN, AS THE BLACK WARRIORS, RECOVERING FROM THEIR DIZZINESS, WORK AT HOBBLING THEIR BEASTS...
WHAT IS IT, LAD? IF IT'S THAT GRINNING SKULL OF STONE, I'VE ALREADY SEEN--
FATHER-- LOOK THERE!
IT-- ISN'T THAT, SIRE...
THEN WHAT IS IT, LAD, AMID THIS DEAD PLAIN, THAT INTERESTS YOU SO?
SURELY, YOU'VE SEEN ENOUGH ROCKS EVEN IN YOUR BRIEF LIFE-TIME TO--
THEN, KING CONAN STOPS SHORT...
FOR, HE SUDDENLY BEHOLDS THAT WHICH HAD BEEN, BUT MOMENTS BEFORE, WHOLLY IN-VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE FROM ABOVE--
--AND HE SEES THAT THE CLIFF, WHICH FROM THE AIR HAD SEEMED A CARVED SKULL, NOW APPEARS AS THE FACADE OF A SPLENDID, ORNATE PALACE!
CROM'S THUNDER!
WHICH OF THE TWO SIGHTS IS REAL, I WONDER--
--THE BARREN LANDSCAPE WE VIEWED FROM THE SKY--


--OR THIS MEADOW, WITH ITS SPANGLE OF FLOWERS?
FATHER--THE AIR--!
YOU'RE RIGHT, SON--THAT'S THE TRUE TEST.
AND IT SMELLS OF PERFUMED FLOWERS AND LUSH GRASSES.
WAS IT SOME HYPNOTIC VAPOR WE SOARED THROUGH, THEN, THAT--?
ANGALIA!
EH? WHAT IS IT, MKWAWA?
THE PALACE, KING CONAN!
SOMEONE COMES!
AND INDEED, FIGURES ARE DRIFTING THROUGH THE PILLARS, DOWN THE SMOOTH STAIRS, COMING TOWARD THEM THROUGH THE SWAYING GRASS:
WOMEN ALL--DUSKY, SINUOUS, WITH SMILING RED LIPS AND EYES LIKE BLACK JEWELS.
LITTLE CRYSTAL BELLS ARE WOVEN THROUGH THE COILS OF THEIR JET-DARK HAIR, SO THAT EACH FIGURE IS SURROUNDED BY A FAINTLY CHIMING MUSIC.

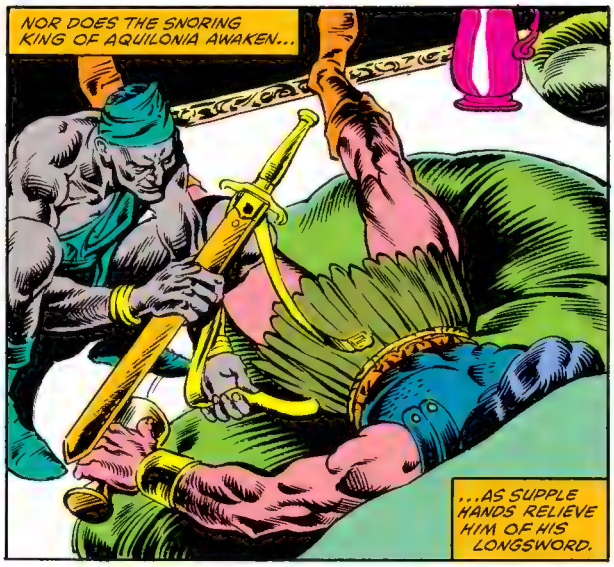
WHAT SHALL WE DO, KING CONAN?
PERHAPS WE CAN LEARN SOMETHING FROM THESE WOMEN, WHO DO NOT SEEM DANGEROUS.
BESIDES, THE GROGGY DRAGONS COULD USE A REST.
HALF OF YOU, COME WITH ME; THE OTHERS WILL GUARD THE WYVERNS.
AND MKWAWA-- DETAIL ONE MAN TO FLY BACK TO THE ARMY, TO SET THEM ON OUR TRAIL.
STILL, AS HE WALKS BOLDLY FORWARD, CONAN MUSES THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH A PLACE THAT CHANGES ITS ENTIRE APPEARANCE IN THE SPACE OF A FEW HEARTBEATS.
Three nights later:
ON THE MARBLE FLOOR OF A GREAT HALL, CONAN AND HIS MEN SPRAWL ON NESTS OF SILKEN CUSHIONS, FEELING CURIOUSLY LAZY AND RELAXED... THEIR BELLIES FILLED WITH SUBTLY FLAVORED VIANDS...
...AND ONLY YOUNG CONN SEEMS TO EVINCE MORE THAN A PASSING INTEREST IN THE SENSUOUSLY DANCING WOMEN NEARBY.

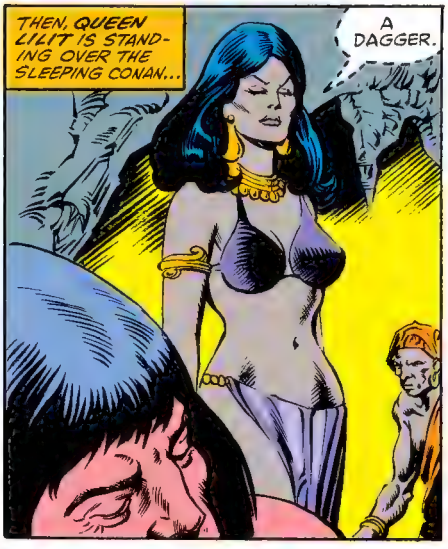
HE HIMSELF HAD NOT BEEN MUCH OLDER, CONAN MUSES, WHEN HE HAD MET URSLA, THE BEAR-WOMAN, PRIESTESS OF THE MOUNTAIN FASTNESS.*
AFTER THAT TIMELY ENCOUNTER, HE HAD SOON BEGUN HIS ROAMINGS, AND QUICKLY SHED THE GRIM PURITANISM OF A CIMMERIAN VILLAGE.
SO, QUEEN LILIT...
...YOU SAY THIS CAVE-CITY OF YOURS IS CALLED YANYOGA?
*SEE CONAN THE BARBARIAN #48. --ROY.
YES, CONAN, AND I AM TRULY SORRY I CANNOT HELP YOU.
BUT, I FEAR I KNOW NOTHING OF THIS THOTH-AMON YOU SEEK... NOR WERE WE AWARE THAT THESE CLIFFS LOOK SKULL-LIKE FROM THE SKY.
FEW PEOPLE COME TO US THAT WAY, OF COURSE.
OF COURSE.
BUT I'M STILL CURIOUS HOW A CITY OF WOMEN CAME TO BE HERE... IF YOU KNOW.
OH, WE KNOW WELL ENOUGH, MY LORD...
"A FEW CENTURIES AGO, A MIGHTY KING IN DISTANT VENDHYA SENT FORTH A FLEET ON A TRADING MISSION TO IRANISTAN.
"A TYPHOON BLEW THIS FLEET FAR OFF ITS COURSE ACROSS THE SOUTHERN OCEAN...
"...AND THE BATTERED SURVIVORS MADE LANDFALL NOT MANY LEAGUES FROM HERE.
"THEY FOUND, AND EN-SLAVED, A RACE OF SMALL, YELLOW-SKINNED ABORIGINES, WHO STILL SERVE US AS SERFS.

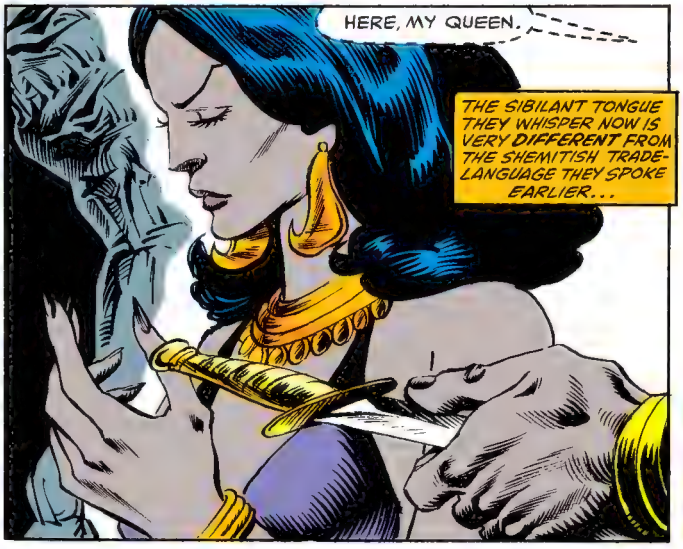
THE VENDHYANS THEMSELVES MATED WITH SLAVE GIRLS WHO HAD BEEN PART OF THEIR CARGO.
THESE FOLK, AND THEIR DESCENDANTS, CARVED YANYOGA OUT OF THE SOFT, CHALKY ROCK OF THIS CLIFF FACE.
INTERESTING.
THIS PALACE, CONAN THINKS, IS REALLY TOO OSTENTATIOUS FOR HIS TASTES...
...OR IS IT JUST THAT WINE HAS DULLED HIS WOLF-SHARP SENSES?
MEANWHILE, IF ONLY WITH HIS EYES THUS FAR, PRINCE CONN IS DEFINITELY PROVING HIMSELF HIS FATHER'S SON...
AND AS THE DANCE ENDS, HE OBSERVES HOW THE GIRL LINGERS, LOOKING BACK AT HIM FROM THE SHADOW OF A DISTANT PILLAR.
IT'S NOW OR NEVER, CONN KNOWS...
...SO IT MIGHT AS WELL BE NOW.

NOW WHERE THE DEVIL DID--
OH, THERE YOU ARE!
AND WHERE ELSE SHOULD I BE, YOUNG PRINCE?
YOU'RE VERY BEAUTIFUL! I--
NOT HERE! THE QUEEN--!
WHERE, THEN?
COME...!
SOON, ONE BY ONE, THE OTHER FEASTERS ALSO RISE AND DEPART, THOUGH NOT ALONE...
...LEAVING THEIR KING DOZING ON HIS CUSHIONS, AS HIS HONEY WINE MAKES A PUDDLE ON THE MARBLE FLOOR.
NOW, SWARTHY SERVING-MEN APPEAR IN THE NEARLY EMPTY HALL, GLIDING AMONG THE SEATS ABANDONED BY CONAN'S GUARDSMEN.

THE BLACKS HAVE LEFT BEHIND THEIR WEAPONS, NOT THINKING TO NEED THEM IN THEIR AMOROUS ENCOUNTERS.
THEY WERE WRONG.


NOR DOES THE SNORING KING OF AQUILONIA AWAKEN...
...AS SUPPLE HANDS RELIEVE HIM OF HIS LONGSWORD.


THEN, QUEEN LILIT IS STANDING OVER THE SLEEPING CONAN...
A DAGGER.


HERE, MY QUEEN.
THE SIBILANT TONGUE THEY WHISPER NOW IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE SHEMITISH TRADE-LANGUAGE THEY SPOKE EARLIER...

AND THE SMILE HAS FADED FROM HER PERFECTLY-SCULPTED FACE--

--AS SHE LIFTS THAT DAGGER HIGH, POISED ABOVE THE CIMMERIAN'S SLOWLY BEATING HEART...!

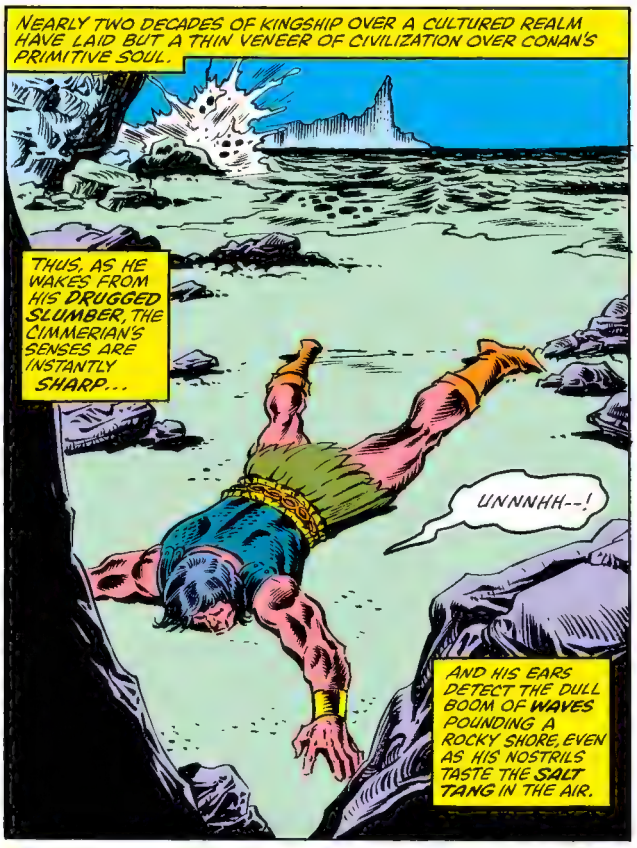
WHILE, IN THE HALF-LIGHT OF A SECLUDED CHAMBER, NOT FAR DISTANT...
YOU'RE...SO VERY LOVELY. I WANT...
YOUR SWORD, MY LORD... IT HURTS ME...!
WE, UH, CAN'T HAVE THAT NOW, CAN WE?
WELL, THAT'S EASILY TAKEN CARE OF.
I'LL JUST SET IT OVER BY THIS COPPER CHEST, AND--
NO! NO!!
WHAT IS WRONG, YOUNG PRINCE?
YOUR REFLECTION!
Y-YOUR HEAD!
YOU'RE ONE OF THE SNAKE-PEOPLE MY FATHER TOLD ME ABOUT!
THIS IS ALL A TRAP!
NO, MY LORD... I SWEAR IT...

YOU ARE WRONG! I AM ONLY A AAAAAAAAH
EVEN AS HE DRIVES HIS GLEAMING BLADE HOME, YOUNG CONN IS SEIZED BY A HORRIBLE FEAR THAT HE HAS MADE A TRAGIC MISTAKE...
...BUT OF COURSE, HE HAS NOT.
AND, AS THE SERPENT-THING'S LIFE EBBS, AND DULL GRAY SCALES TAKE THE PLACE OF WARM DUSKY SKIN...
...AQUILONIA'S PRINCE IS SUDDENLY SICK.
UNNNHNN--!
WHEN IT IS OVER, HE FEELS WEAK, BUT PURGED...HIS MIND CLEAR.
CONN KNOWS THE ANCIENT MYTHS OF THE SERPENT-FOLK, SLAIN IN LEGEND BY MIRA THE LIGHT-BRINGER...
...BUT IN ACTUALITY BY KULL, HERO-KING OF ANCIENT VALUSIA.
ONCE, LONG BEFORE EVEN KULL'S TIME, THEY HAD RULED OVER ORDINARY MEN...AND THEY COULD CLOUD MEN'S MINDS TO PASS AMONG THEM, BUT THEY COULD NOT FOOL MIRRORS.
NOW, THE LAST SURVIVORS OF THIS LOATHSOME RACE HAVE FLED TO THE WORLD'S RIM TO BIDE THEIR TIME...
...AND IT MAY BE THAT ONLY CONN KNOWS THEIR HORRIBLE SECRET!
FATHER...!

AS, ELSEWHERE--
LILIT! HOLD!
WHO DARES--?
YOU! WHO COMMANDS HERE, STYGIAN-- YOU OR I?
VENGEANCE IS MINE, LILIT.
IN ALL ELSE, I YIELD TO YOU...BUT IN THIS I AM ADAMANT.
THE CIMMERIAN IS THOTH-AMON'S CAPTIVE!
MY CENTURIES WEIGH HEAVILY UPON ME NOW, SINCE THAT BARBARIAN DOG SMASHED FIRST THE BLACK RING AT NEBTHU...
...THEN NENAUNIR IN ZEMBABWEI.
I KNOW YOUR CUNNING HEART, HUMAN JACKAL!
YOU THINK TO SACRIFICE HIM TO FATHER SET, GOD OF US SERPENT-FOLK...AND THUS REGAIN YOUR FAVORED POSITION.
BUT, THOUGH MY FORM NOW BE OLD, SHRUNKEN AND FRAIL... MY MAGIC STILL IS SUFFICIENT TO DESTROY HIM.
BUT I, TOO, HAVE PLANS FOR THE CIMMERIAN...
...AND IT IS THOSE PLANS THAT SHALL--
URRKK
BY MAMAJAMBO'S WAR CLUB!
WE HAVE COME JUST IN TIME!

COME, WARRIORS!
LESS HALE AND HEARTY THAN YOU I MAY BE, BUT I MUST SEE HOW MY KING FARE IN THIS ACCURSED--
BY ALL THE GODS--THOTH-AMON!
OH, AYE? WE DRAW NEAR A SKULL-CLIFF THAT BECOMES A MEADOW-GIRT PALACE...
...TO FIND THE LORD CONAN SNORING LIKE A BESOTTED DRUNKARD...
...AND THIS WOMAN-THING BENDING OVER HIM WITH A KNIFE, AS WELL AS AN OLD MAN IN A ROBE!
WHAT MONSTROUS SORCERY IS THIS, ANYWAY?
THE...SNAKE... THAT... SPEAKS!
THE SNAKE THAT SPEAKS!
OLD MAN, YOU SPEAK OF THAT WHICH NONE SHOULD NAME ALOUD!
CAN IT BE, THOUGH, THAT THE OLD MYTHS ARE TRUE?
THE PROOF OF IT LIES DEAD AT YOUR FEET, NZINGA.
LOOK! EVEN AS WE FENCE WITH WORDS--
--IT CHANGES, IT'S REPTILE BODY LOSING ALL HUMAN SEMBLANCE, MOMENT BY MOMENT! IT--
TROCERO! NZINGA! BEWARE!--

THE SERPENT-MEN!
HHSSSSSSSSSS
OLD MAN-- IT APPEARS YOU MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT, AFTER ALL.
PRINCESS-- YOU ARE A MASTER OF UNDER-STATEMENT!
YOUR MOTHER, THE QUEEN, SHOULD MAKE YOU CHIEF AMONG HER DIPLOMATS!
THEN, BOTH TROCERO AND NZINGA ARE FAR TOO BUSY FOR FURTHER SPEECH...
--AS WARRIORS AND THE HISSING HORDE FALL UPON EACH OTHER!
AND, IN THE MAD CLASH THAT FOLLOWS, NEITHER OF THEM NOTICES THE STRANGEST, MOST INEXPLICABLE THING OF ALL:
BOTH THE SPRAWLING, UNCONSCIOUS CIMMERIAN AND HIS SORCEROUS ARCH-FOE THOTH-AMON HAVE VANISHED, AS IF MELTED INTO THIN AIR!

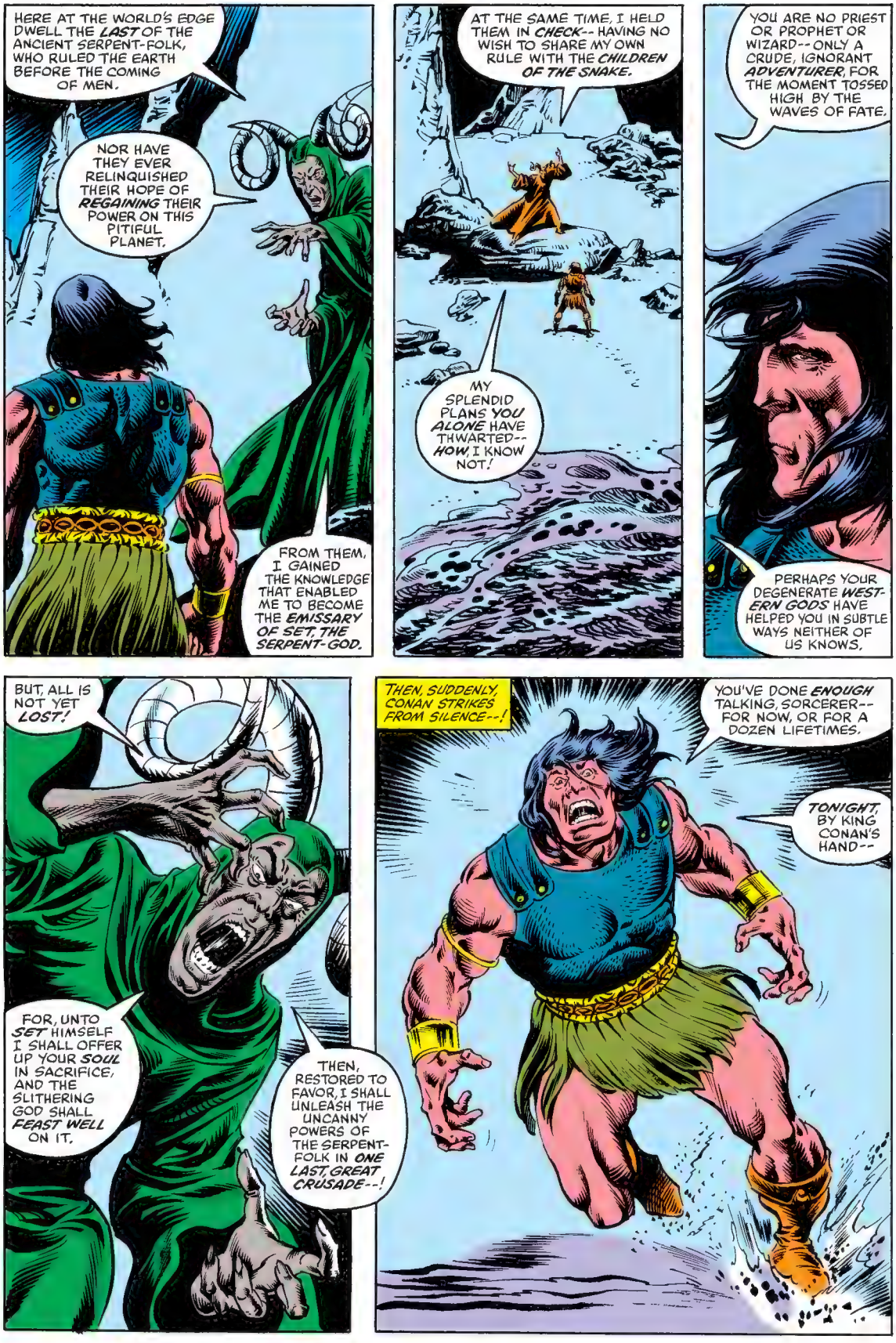

NEARLY TWO DECADES OF KINGSHIP OVER A CULTURED REALM HAVE LAID BUT A THIN VENEER OF CIVILIZATION OVER CONAN'S PRIMITIVE SOUL.
THUS, AS HE WAKES FROM HIS DRUGGED SLUMBER, THE CIMMERIAN'S SENSES ARE INSTANTLY SHARP...
UNNNHH--!
AND HIS EARS DETECT THE DULL BOOM OF WAVES POUNDING A ROCKY SHORE, EVEN AS HIS NOSTRILS TASTE THE SALT TANG IN THE AIR.

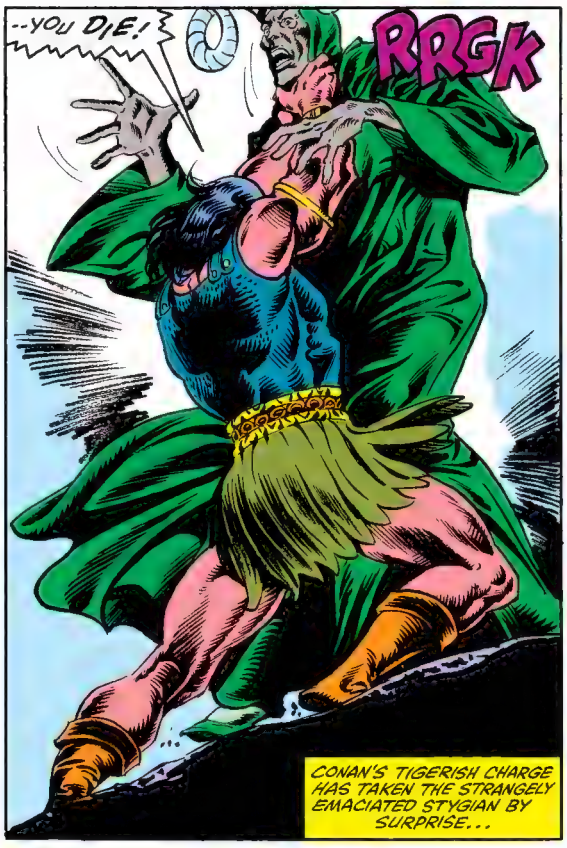
FROM A BRIEF GLANCE AT STARRY SKIES AS HE STARTS TO RISE, HE KNOWS THAT THE NEARBY SEA STRETCHES AWAY TO THE SOUTH.
BUT, AS FAR AS HIS SMOLDERING GAZE CAN PENETRATE THE MURK OF NIGHT, HE CAN SEE NO LAND.
IT IS AS IF HE LIES AT THE WORLD'S VERY EDGE, AND THE SHORE THEREOF IS WASHED BY THE ENDLESS SEAS OF ETERNITY.
HOW, HE WONDERS, DID HE COME HERE?

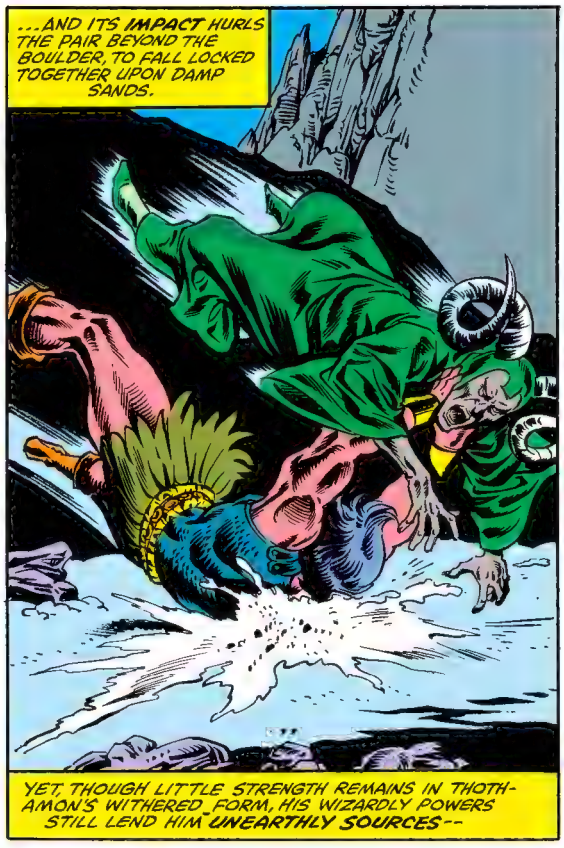
HE DOES NOT WONDER FOR LONG.
WE MEET AGAIN, DOG OF CIMMERIA!
FOR THE LAST TIME, JACKAL OF STYGIA!
WARY OF THOTH-AMON'S REMAINING POWERS, HOWEVER, HE MAKES NO MOVE TOWARD THE GAUNT WIZARD.

YOU PONDER, I KNOW, WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE ALIVE WITH THE AID OF THE UNSEEN DEMONS WHO STILL SERVE ME.
YOU HAVE HOUNDED ME DOWN THE LENGTH OF THE WORLD, BARBARIAN...

ONE BY ONE, YOU HAVE SUNDERED FROM ME MY MOST POWERFUL ALLIES:
THE WHITE HAND IN WINTRY HYPERBOREA... THE BLACK RING AT NEBTHU...EVEN NEMAUNIR IN ZEMBABWEI.
NOW, THERE IS NO FURTHER REALM TO WHICH I CAN FLY FOR REFUGE.


HERE AT THE WORLD'S EDGE DWELL THE LAST OF THE ANCIENT SERPENT-FOLK, WHO RULED THE EARTH BEFORE THE COMING OF MEN.
NOR HAVE THEY EVER RELINQUISHED THEIR HOPE OF REGAINING THEIR POWER ON THIS PITIFUL PLANET.
FROM THEM, I GAINED THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ENABLED ME TO BECOME THE EMISSARY OF SET, THE SERPENT-GOD.
AT THE SAME TIME, I HELD THEM IN CHECK-- HAVING NO WISH TO SHARE MY OWN RULE WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE SNAKE.
MY SPLENDID PLANS YOU ALONE HAVE THWARTED-- HOW, I KNOW NOT!
YOU ARE NO PRIEST OR PROPHET OR WIZARD-- ONLY A CRUDE, IGNORANT ADVENTURER, FOR THE MOMENT TOSSED HIGH BY THE WAVES OF FATE.
PERHAPS YOUR DEGENERATE WESTERN GODS HAVE HELPED YOU IN SUBTLE WAYS NEITHER OF US KNOWS.
BUT, ALL IS NOT YET LOST!
FOR, UNTO SET HIMSELF I SHALL OFFER UP YOUR SOUL IN SACRIFICE, AND THE SLITHERING GOD SHALL FEAST WELL ON IT.
THEN, RESTORED TO FAVOR, I SHALL UNLEASH THE UNCANNY POWERS OF THE SERPENT-FOLK IN ONE LAST, GREAT CRUSADE--!
THEN, SUDDENLY, CONAN STRIKES FROM SILENCE--!
YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH TALKING, SORCERER-- FOR NOW, OR FOR A DOZEN LIFETIMES.
TONIGHT, BY KING CONAN'S HAND--


--YOU DIE!
RRGK
CONAN'S TIGERISH CHARGE HAS TAKEN THE STRANGELY EMACIATED STYGIAN BY SURPRISE...

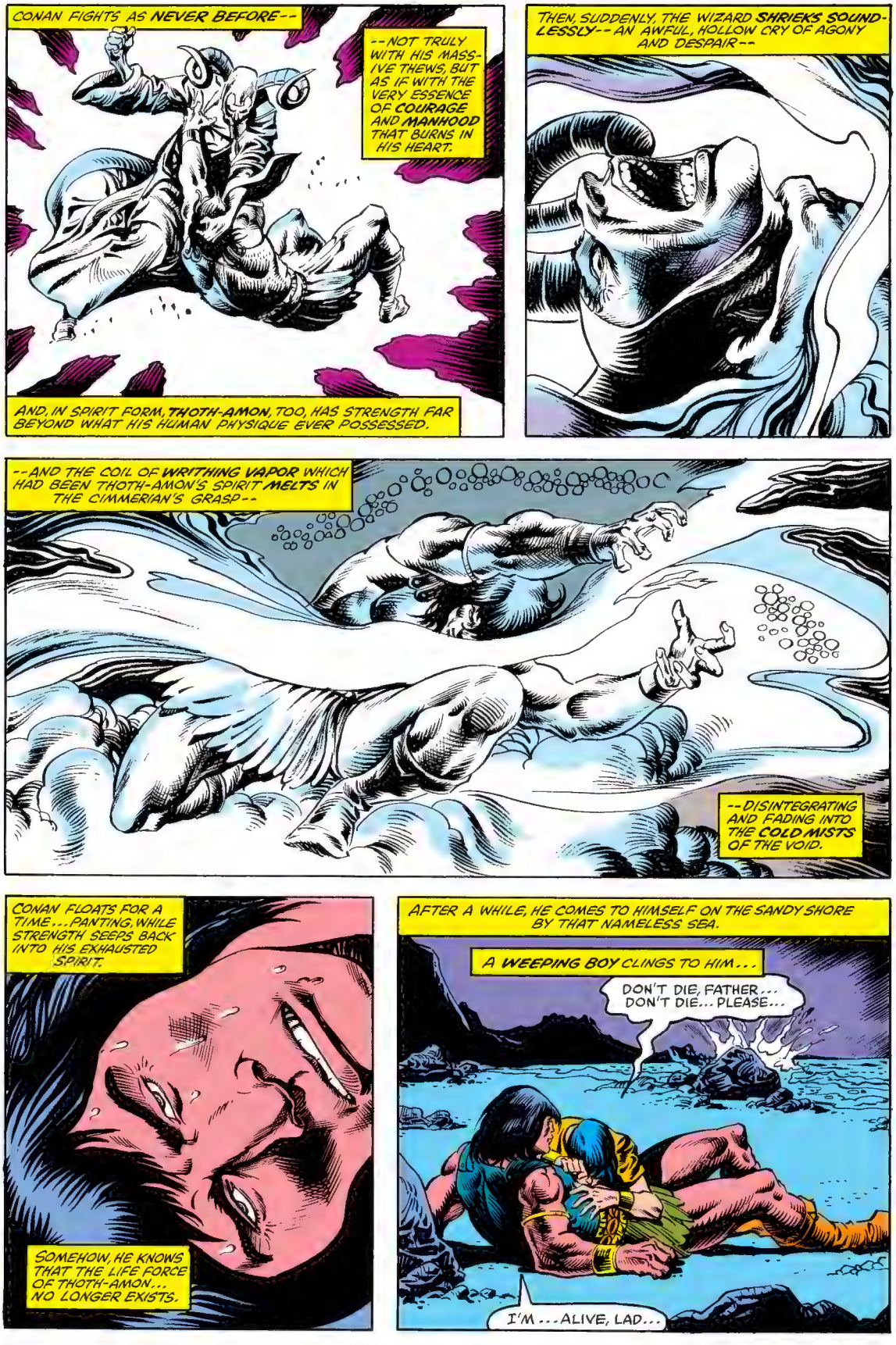

...AND ITS IMPACT HURLS THE PAIR BEYOND THE BOULDER, TO FALL LOCKED TOGETHER UPON DAMP SANDS.
YET, THOUGH LITTLE STRENGTH REMAINS IN THOTH-AMON'S WITHERED FORM, HIS WIZARDLY POWERS STILL LEND HIM UNEARTHLY SOURCES--

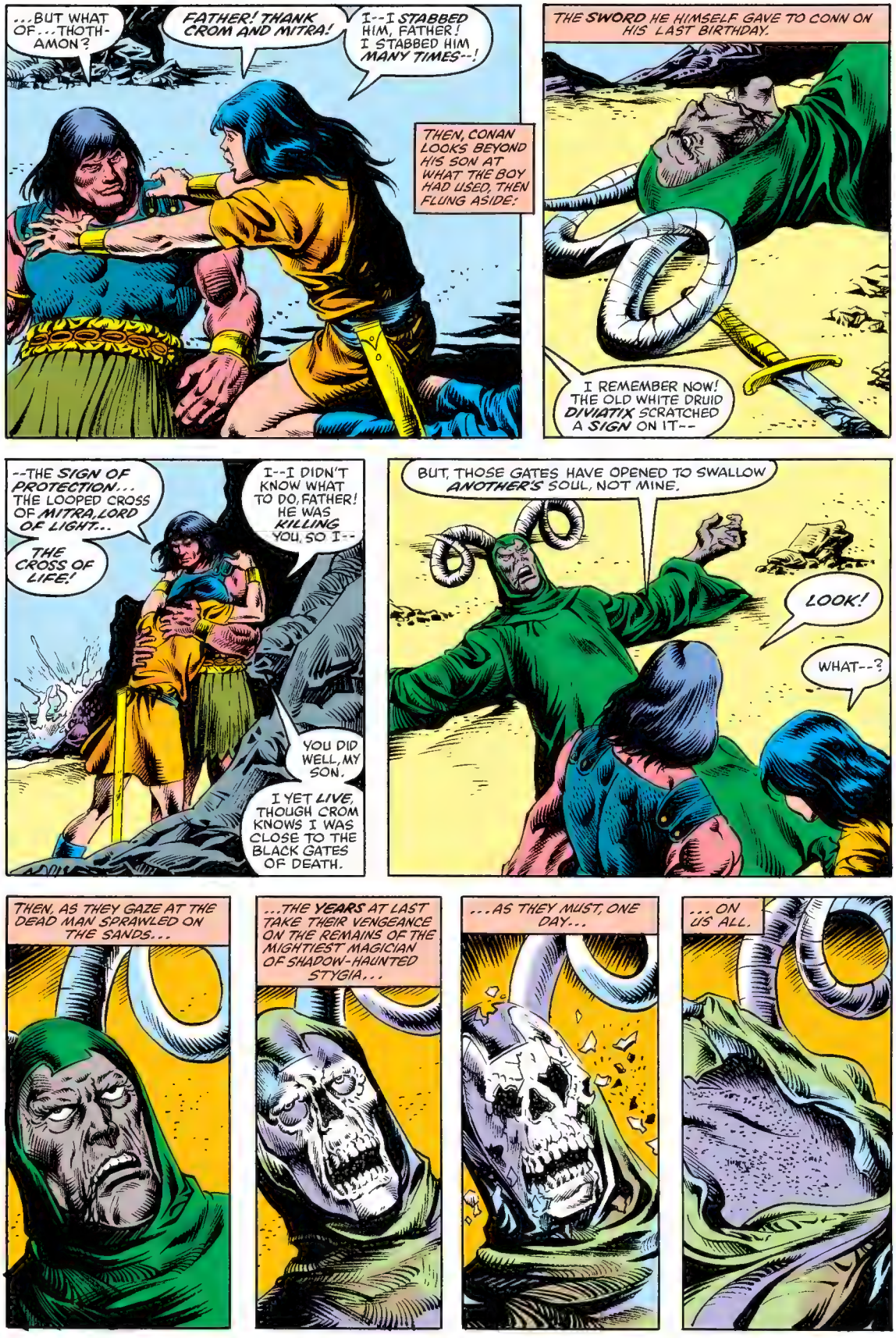
AND, EVEN AS KING CONAN'S FINGERS LOCK ON THAT DUSKY, FRAGILE NECK...

...A TOUCH LIKE FREEZING FIRE BRUSHES LIGHTLY AGAINST HIS BROW--
AAARRRR

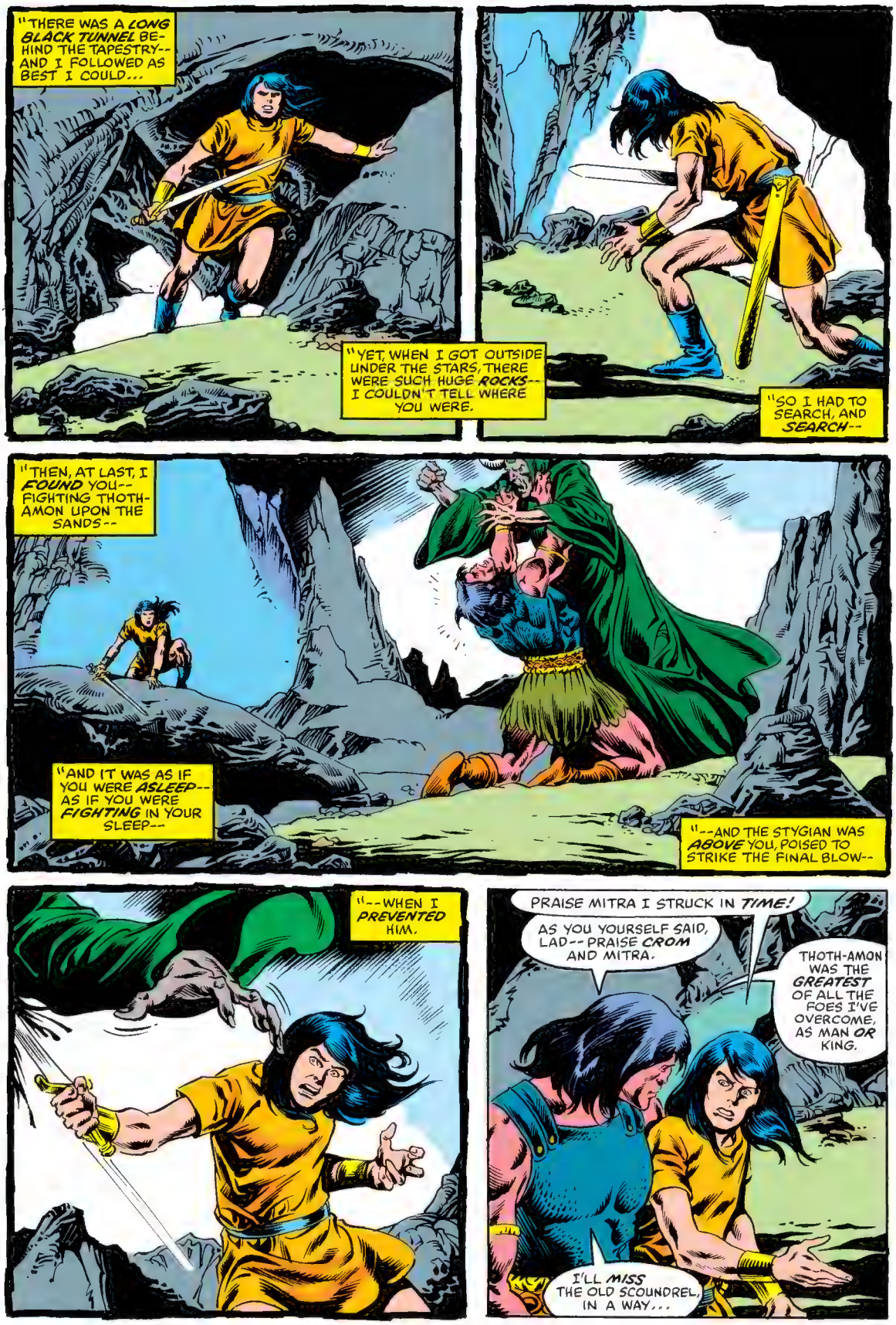
--AND COLD WAVES OF BLACKNESS ENGULF HIS CONSCIOUSNESS.
IT SEEMS TO THE BARBARIAN THAT HE SINKS THROUGH DARKLING WATERS WHOSE BITE BE-NUMB HIS FLESH...

...UNTIL HIS NAKED SPIRIT ALONE WRITHES THERE ON THE SANDS,
BUT, STILL IS THOTH-AMON HELD HELPLESS IN CONAN'S GRIP-- FOR, IT IS AS IF THE SORCERER, TOO, HAS LEFT HIS FLESHLY SHELL BEHIND--
--AND TWO IM-PALPABLE SPIRITS, LOCKED IN CONFLICT, RISE FROM THE VORTEX INTO A DIM REGION BEYOND THE WORLD!
ABOUT THEM, MIST SWIRLS AND BILLOWS, GRAY AND COLORLESS.
ABOVE THEM, BLACK STARS BURN AGAINST NATURAL SKIES; THE LIGHT FROM THEM IS AS COLD AS THE BREATH OF ARCTIC WINDS.


CONAN FIGHTS AS NEVER BEFORE--
--NOT TRULY WITH HIS MASSIVE THEWS, BUT AS IF WITH THE VERY ESSENCE OF COURAGE AND MANHOOD THAT BURNS IN HIS HEART.
AND, IN SPIRIT FORM, THOTH-AMON, TOO, HAS STRENGTH FAR BEYOND WHAT HIS HUMAN PHYSIQUE EVER POSSESSED.
THEN, SUDDENLY, THE WIZARD SHRIEKS SOUNDLESSLY--AN AWFUL, HOLLOW CRY OF AGONY AND DESPAIR--
--AND THE COIL OF WRITHING VAPOR WHICH HAD BEEN THOTH-AMON'S SPIRIT MELTS IN THE CIMMERIAN'S GRASP--
--DISINTEGRATING AND FADING INTO THE COLD MISTS OF THE VOID.
CONAN FLOATS FOR A TIME...PANTING, WHILE STRENGTH SEEPS BACK INTO HIS EXHAUSTED SPIRIT.
SOMEHOW, HE KNOWS THAT THE LIFE FORCE OF THOTH-AMON... NO LONGER EXISTS.
AFTER A WHILE, HE COMES TO HIMSELF ON THE SANDY SHORE BY THAT NAMELESS SEA.
A WEEPING BOY CLINGS TO HIM...
DON'T DIE, FATHER... DON'T DIE... PLEASE...
I'M ...ALIVE, LAD...


...BUT WHAT OF...THOTH-AMON?
FATHER! THANK CROM AND MITRA!
I--I STABBED HIM, FATHER! I STABBED HIM MANY TIMES--!
THEN, CONAN LOOKS BEYOND HIS SON AT WHAT THE BOY HAD USED, THEN FLUNG ASIDE:
THE SWORD HE HIMSELF GAVE TO CONN ON HIS LAST BIRTHDAY.
I REMEMBER NOW! THE OLD WHITE DRUID DIVIATIX SCRATCHED A SIGN ON IT--
--THE SIGN OF PROTECTION... THE LOOPED CROSS OF MITRA, LORD OF LIGHT...
THE CROSS OF LIFE!
I--I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, FATHER! HE WAS KILLING YOU, SO I--
YOU DID WELL, MY SON.
I YET LIVE, THOUGH CROM KNOWS I WAS CLOSE TO THE BLACK GATES OF DEATH.
BUT, THOSE GATES HAVE OPENED TO SWALLOW ANOTHER'S SOUL, NOT MINE.
LOOK!
WHAT--?
THEN, AS THEY GAZE AT THE DEAD MAN SPRAWLED ON THE SANDS...
...THE YEARS AT LAST TAKE THEIR VENGEANCE ON THE REMAINS OF THE MIGHTIEST MAGICIAN OF SHADOW-HAUNTED STYGIA...
...AS THEY MUST, ONE DAY...
...ON US ALL.

SHALL WE GO WITHIN NOW, FATHER-- TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE THE OTHERS?
IN A MOMENT, SON, AS SOON AS I FIND--
AH, HERE IT IS.
THOTH-AMON'S RING!
WHO KNOWS WHAT VILE SORCERY STILL LURKS WITHIN ITS SPARKLING DEPTHS?
WILL YOU TAKE IT BACK TO TARANTIA, SIRE?
NO, SON. IT WOULD BE TOO TEMPTING A PRIZE FOR MEN OF EVIL PURPOSE, OR EVEN FOR--
SO END ALL MAGICAL MUMMERY!
MAY IT STAY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA FOR A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS!
NOW, HOW CAME YOU HERE IN TIME TO SAVE YOUR OLD FATHER, CONN.
I WAS... WITH A GIRL, WHO TURNED INTO A SNAKE-HEADED MONSTER, SO THAT I HAD TO SLAY HER.
JUST AS I WAS COMING BACK TO YOU, THE AMAZONS CAME IN, TO SLAY THE QUEEN.
SHE TURNED INTO A SNAKE-THING TOO, OF COURSE...
"THEN, THERE WAS FIGHTING EVERYWHERE-- SERPENT-MEN AGAINST OUR WARRIORS--
"--AND I COULDN'T REACH YOUR SIDE, THROUGH THE FRAY.
"BUT I SAW THOTH-AMON CARRY YOU FROM THE HALL...
"...AS IF HIS MAGIC GAVE HIM A SHORT SURGE OF STRENGTH.
"NO ONE SEEMED TO BE ABLE TO SEE THIS EXCEPT ME... AS IF A SPELL HID HIS ACTIONS.


"THERE WAS A LONG BLACK TUNNEL BEHIND THE TAPESTRY--AND I FOLLOWED AS BEST I COULD...
"YET, WHEN I GOT OUTSIDE UNDER THE STARS, THERE WERE SUCH HUGE ROCKS--I COULDN'T TELL WHERE YOU WERE.
"SO I HAD TO SEARCH, AND SEARCH--
"THEN, AT LAST, I FOUND YOU--FIGHTING THOTH-AMON UPON THE SANDS--
"AND IT WAS AS IF YOU WERE ASLEEP--AS IF YOU WERE FIGHTING IN YOUR SLEEP--
"--AND THE STYGIAN WAS ABOVE YOU, POISED TO STRIKE THE FINAL BLOW--
"--WHEN I PREVENTED HIM.
PRAISE MITRA I STRUCK IN TIME!
AS YOU YOURSELF SAID, LAD--PRAISE CROM AND MITRA.
THOTH-AMON WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE FOES I'VE OVERCOME, AS MAN OR KING.
I'LL MISS THE OLD SCOUNDREL, IN A WAY...

...BUT NOT TOO MUCH.
I TAKE IT THAT'S THE WAY WE CAME?
AYE! WE'D BEST HURRY, IF WE'RE GOING TO JOIN THE FRAY BEFORE THE SERPENT-MEN ARE ALL DEAD.
I'LL BE GLAD WHEN THE LAST OF THEM IS DEAD, NO MATTER BY WHOSE HAND. STILL...

HMMM... DO YOU STILL HAVE YOUR SWORD, BOY?
YES, SIRE.
THEN, LET ME FIND AN APPROPRIATE MOPPING-UP WEAPON, AND WE'LL--
AH! THERE'S A COUPLE OF WHAT I'M AFTER!

COME ON! NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, I DO HUNGER TO SMASH IN THE HEADS OF A FEW SNAKE-MEN.
OH, AND BY THE WAY...

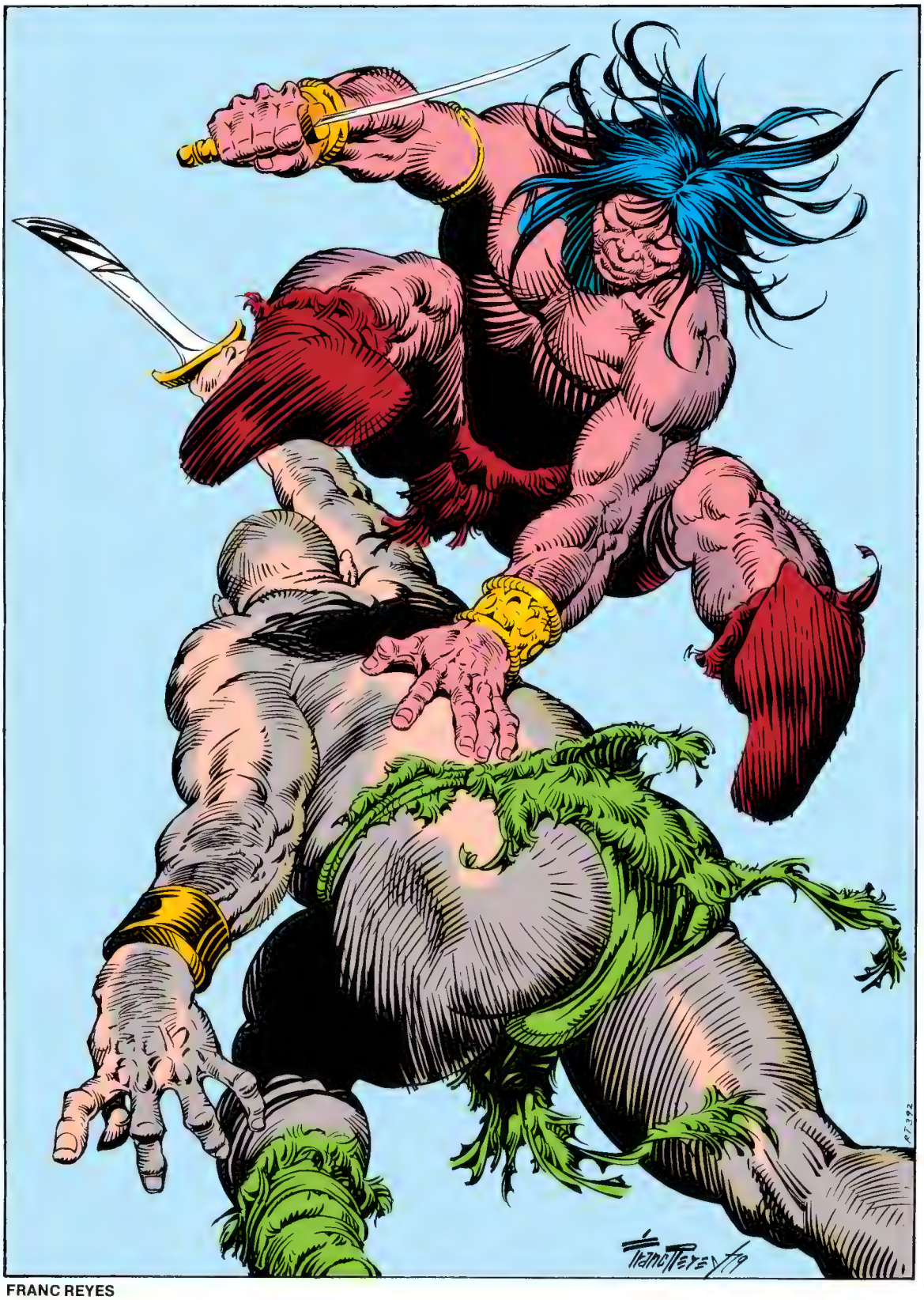
...THANKS FOR PUTTING A SWORD THROUGH OLD THOTH-AMON WHEN YOU DID... SON.
IT WAS MY PLEASURE... FATHER.

TOGETHER, FATHER AND SON ENTER THE BLACK TUNNEL AND GO TO JOIN THEIR FRIENDS IN THE FINAL BATTLE AGAINST MAN'S OLDEST ENEMIES.
SNAKES DIE SLOW AND HARD... BUT THEY DO DIE, AT LAST...!

NEXT ISSUE: **CONAN THE AVENGER!**

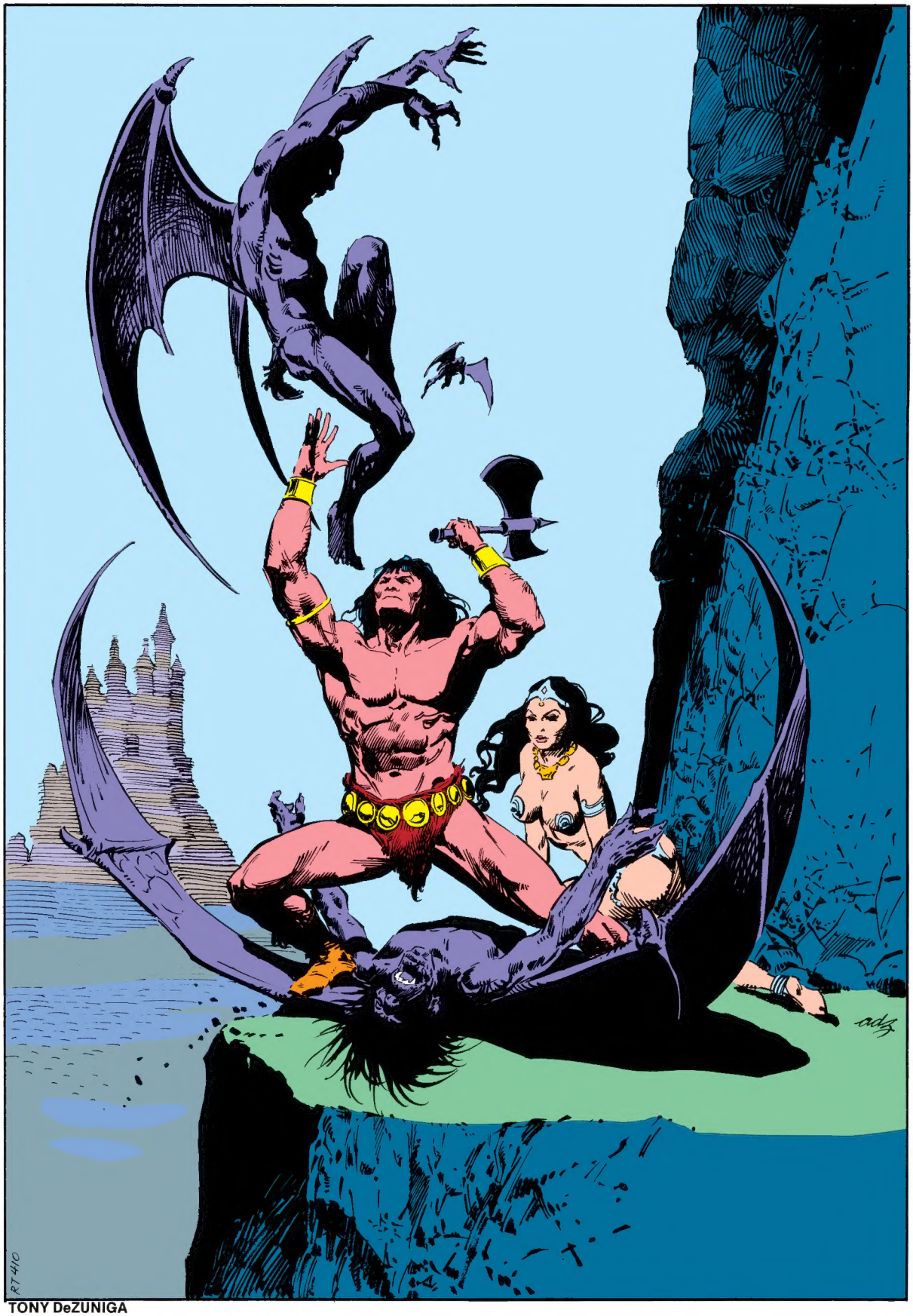
SPECIAL PIN-UP PANORAMA:
To round out our issue, here are a sextet of catacylsmic Conan drawings by some of the Bullpen's finest — each published for the first time anywhere! Enjoy, Hyboriophile--!
—R.T.

CARMINE INFANTINO & DANNY BULANADI



FRANC REYES

JOHN BUSCEMA & BOB McLEOD



TONY DeZUNIGA

KEITH POLLARD & AUBRY BRADFORD

MADZ-CASTRILLO

KING CONAN

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

ROY THOMAS
EDITOR
MARK GRUENWALD
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Roy:

"The Black Sphinx of Nebthu" (KING CONAN #2) was very good. The team of John Buscema and Ernie Chan really work magic together. I like very much the way you remember to use continuity in your tales; the relationship between father and son is a rare thing to see these days. Most times, fathers and sons in comics are fighting constantly.

It's also invigorating to see the return of an old Conan foe. Most of the time, of course, his enemies are slain in a single story and never pop up again. Thoth-Amon can put some of the modern-day Marvel villains to shame. His ambition may have been told many times, but he is one of the few who can back up his claims.

Charles David Haskell
15 W. 139th St., 4R
New York, NY 10037

True enough, C.D., but if and when the Stygian master mage appears again, it will have to be in a story dealing with an earlier period in Conan's life. For, with this issue, Thoth-Amon is dead... period. That's the way L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter saw it several years ago when they first wrote the story "Shadows in the Skull," and we see no reason to gainsay them. After all, Robert E. Howard himself used Thoth-Amon in only a couple of tales, and in one of these he was an offstage character at that; so the legend of Thoth-Amon as Conan's "great foe" is primarily a de Camp/Carter addendum to the Conan saga, and if *they* don't know when he dies, who does? Certainly not your beleaguered Bullpen!
—R.T.

Dear Marvel,

What can I say about KING CONAN #2? I wanted to write to you about your great, fantastic, superb, colorfully collected and illustrated publication, but I was stumped as to wnat to say. What? Oh, I *did,* didn't I?

Tom Salzberg
11 Hedwig Ct.
W. Hartford, CN 06107

You did? —R.T.

Dear Marvel:

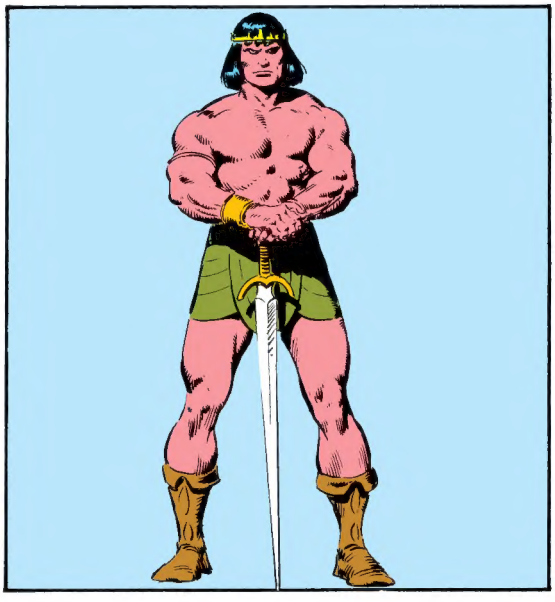
This is the third time I've written to tyou. First, I'd like you to know that of all the Marvel mags I buy, SAVAGE SWORD has become my favorite. But I'm also picking up on the 40¢ color comic CONAN THE BARBARIAN and now KING CONAN. I haven't read any of the novels, but I don't need to; your versions are better. By the way, my paper doesn't carry the "Conan" strip either daily or on Sunday. I'd like to change that, but I don't know how to go about doing it. May I add that I'm looking forward to the Conan movie, also?

William Wolanin
697 Arlington Av.
New Castle, PA 16101

You certainly may, William, especially since the Hollywood trade papers just the other day announced that filming will begin January 12, 1981. We know, we know — the movie was originally scheduled to begin principal photography, as they say in the film biz, in January of *'80,* but these things take time. (So far, pushing five years!)

As to the "Conan" newspaper strip, we'd simply suggest that you drop a line to the Comics Page Editor of your local paper and ask him to start carrying the strip, which is distributed by the Register and Tribune Syndicate of Des Moines, Iowa, who also distribute "Spider-Man," "The Hulk," "Family Circus," and other popular strips.

But we'd like to repeat in closing what we always say to CONAN readers who tell us they've not read the original Robert E. Howard novels: *Read* them! We're hardly ashamed of our own contribution to the Conan canon over the past ten years, but the fact remains that the original Conan — just like the real Tarzan, or the actual Sherlock Holmes or James Bond — must be read in the original prose edition to get the full flavor. Matter of fact, when you do so, you'll be in a better position to judge our work as a whole. We envy you, friend — you're in for a first-class treat!
—R.T.



THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST!

☐ **TWO-IN-ONE #70** — The **Thing** vs. Live Wire and Shellshock!
☐ **MOON KNIGHT #2** — The Scythe of the Slasher!
☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #33** — Fear stalks 'Frisco!
☐ **STAR TREK #9** — "Plague of Madness!"
☐ **MACHINE MAN #18** — ***Alpha Flight*** strikes!
☑ **KING CONAN #4** — "Shadows In The Skull!"
☐ **SPIDER-MAN #211** — Face-to-face with ***Sub-Mariner!***
☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #252** — Batroc and Mr. Hyde! Plus: Cap's secret life!
☐ **THOR #302** — Locus, the Geometric Man!
☐ **MICRONAUTS #24** — Victims of Computrex, the Killer Computer!
☐ **GHOST RIDER #51** — Murder, kidnapping, the supernatural... and Ghost Rider!
☐ **HULK #254** — Hulk vs. the U-Foes!
☐ **DR. STRANGE #44** — Death-duel with the Shadowqueen!
☐ **SHE-HULK #11** — *Morbius!*
☐ **AVENGERS #202** — Showdown with Ultron!
☐ **CONAN #117** — "Vengeance of the Sorcerer!"
☐ **MARVEL TALES #122** — (Reprints Spidey #145) *Gwen Stacy Lives!*
☐ **MARVEL'S GREATEST #95** — (Reprints FF #115) Reed — slave of the Over-Mind!
☐ **X-MEN #140** — The man-eating ***Wendigo*** strikes!
☐ **FANTASY MASTERPIECES #13** — (Reprints Silver Surfer #13 and Warlock #10) The Surfer faces the Doomsday Man while Warlock and *Thanos* team up!)
☐ **ROM #13** — The Plunderer! And beginning: ***Saga of the Spaceknights!***
☐ **TALES TO ASTONISH #13** — (Reprints Sub-Mariner #13) Final battle for the Serpent Crown!
☐ **IRON MAN #141** — The malevolence of Force!
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